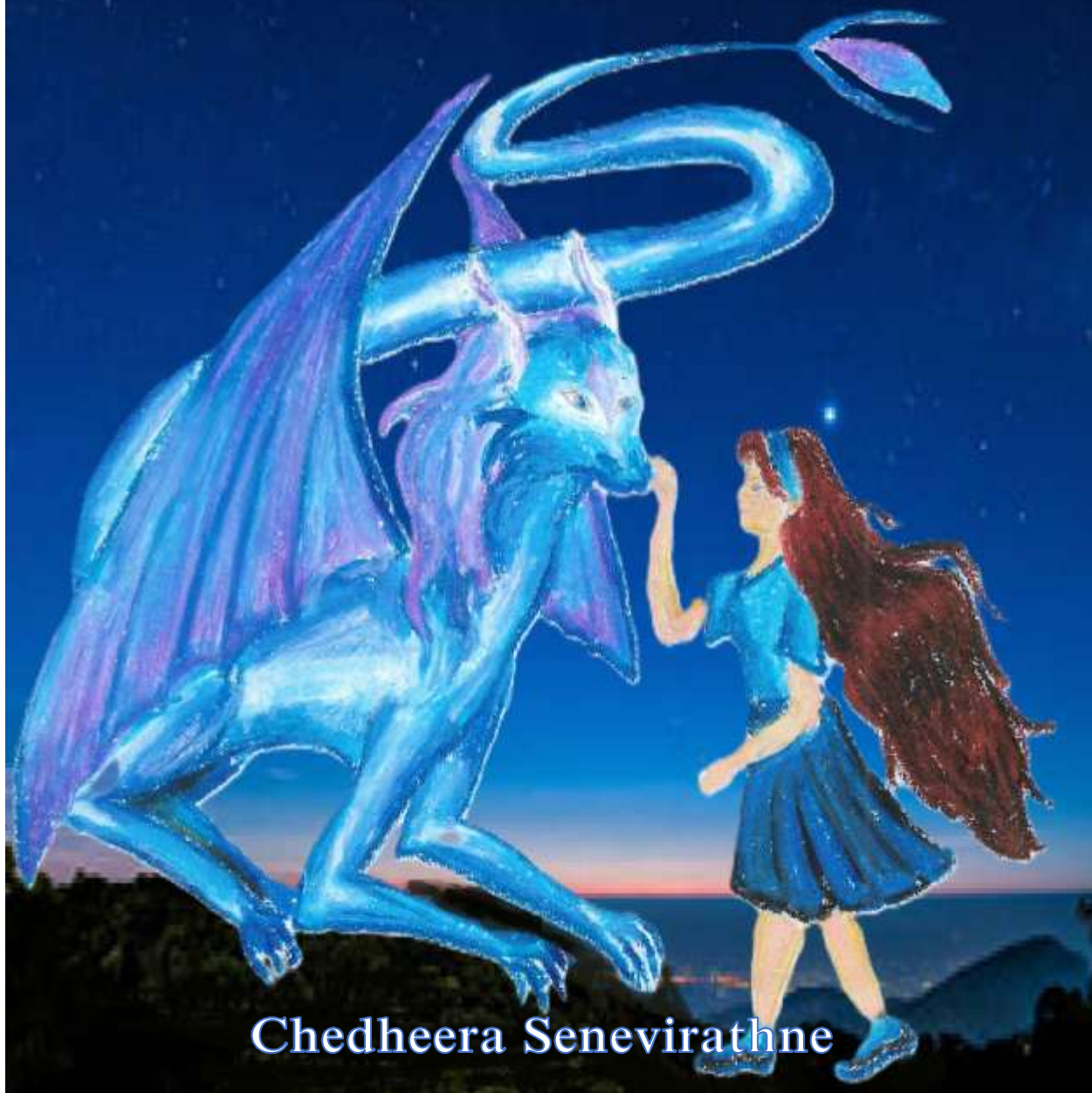


The Mysteries of Aurora's Hollow



The Mysteries of Aurora's Hollow

Chedheera Senevirathne

Author's other publications

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Dedication

To my parents, grandparents
and
my teachers
who encouraged me
to read books
and
to Senevirathne sir
for introducing this E- book project
to our school



Foreword

In an increasingly complex global future, the "Hemamala Upahara" book project, led by Mahamaya Girls' College, stands as a turning point in girls' education. Over a decade, it has successfully nurtured thousands of children to become young authors.

This year, by collaborating with other schools, we aimed to provide students with a wealth of new experiences. The goal was to develop multi-faceted skills, including communication, values, and creative growth. As a result, children have written books that pay tribute to Princess Hemamala, who brought the Sacred Tooth Relic—the supreme symbol of the Buddhist world—to the Hill Country (Kandy).

I extend my gratitude to everyone involved, including the students who contributed their creativity and the teachers who guided them.

Shashikala Senadhira

Principal

Mahamaya Girls' College

Congratulatory Message

It is a great honor for me, as the Governor of the Central Province, to send a congratulatory message for the launch of the books created through the Hemamala Tribute Book Creation Project initiated by Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy.

Education is the fundamental foundation for the progress of society, and it is further strengthened through books and literary creations. It is clearly commendable that students' talents, creativity, and intellectual abilities are emerging through projects such as this.

I believe that this book creation project will provide valuable knowledge and a precious literary contribution not only to the students but to the entire society. Furthermore, I hope that through such efforts, future writers who will bring pride to Sri Lanka will emerge.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation and blessings to the Principal, the academic staff, the students, and everyone involved who dedicated themselves to this successful endeavor. I wish this project and the book launch ceremony great success.

Sarath B.S. Abeykoon

Governor, Central Province

Emeritus Professor, University of Peradeniya

2026-05-10

Congratulatory Message

I highly appreciate the noble and outstanding effort of the Principal and the academic staff of Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy, the student daughters, the students of other participating schools, and everyone who dedicated themselves to plan and implement this book publication project. The project was organized under the leadership of Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy, with the participation of other schools in the Kandy Zone, with the aim of encouraging children toward book creation within the current school system, as a tribute to Hemamala Kumariya who brought the Sacred Tooth Relic to Sri Lanka.

For several decades, Sri Lanka has been committed to providing free, compulsory, quality, and equitable education to all children, thereby producing a future generation of intelligent and skilled citizens. In such a context, this book creation program for school children helps develop creative ability, critical thinking, and other positive qualities for a balanced and well-rounded personality, and contributes to building a future knowledge-based society.

May all activities of the Hemamala Tribute Book Creation Project be successful through the blessings of the Sacred Tooth Relic.

Pradeep Nilanga Dela

Diyawadana Nilame,

Sri Dalada Maligawa.

2026.05.10.

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CHAPTER ONE

The Book and the Voice

There was an extraordinary girl. She lived in Queen's lane. She had no siblings. She was Hilda Blaze. She was curious of everything. She believed in magic and so did her friends. Sally Vale and Alicia Rave were her best friends. It was only them who believed magic. Not even their parents. They always say it is a ridiculous. It does seem to be a ridiculous thing.

Hilda has dark brown long hair. Her hair even touches her knees. Hilda read books a lot. Not educational. She read fictions. She lived in her imaginary world that never exist. But she focuses on her work if she needs to. She likes photography since she was five. She hoped a camera from Santa these couple of years but unfortunately discovered that Santa doesn't exist. It was her parents who put whatever she wanted under the Christmas tree.

Alicia had black hair. She had an elbow length hair. Her height was the same as Hilda's. Alicia has an elder sister. Her name was Diana. She has finished school and studying abroad. She didn't like reading books as much as Hilda but she still borrows some books from the library. Her book count on the library card was five. While Hilda's was thirteen and Sally's were thirty-nine. Anyway, Alicia didn't care much about anything. She did complete her notes because she had to.

Sally had short Blonde hair. She was shorter than Alicia and Hilda. She was very timid. But she was very organized and hard-working compared to the other two. She was top in every class. The friends were neighbors of course. Their houses were side by side. They went to the same school and were in the same class. They went to school by bus. And came by bus too. They usually go to the nearby library to do their homework and afterwards they go to play with their other friends almost every day.

Sally has a little brother who goes to the same school as them. His name is Andrew. He was quite annoying sometimes. He wanted to know everything what Hilda, Alicia and Sally do. He was not like Sally. He wasn't even in top twenty in class. He always wanted to be like her sister. He sometimes stole Sally's notes and books to see if she still was going to be first in class. To his surprise Sally somehow got them back. She locked her room and took the key with her where ever she goes. So, Andrew's secret enemy was Sally.

Hilda's birthday is coming next week. She was very excited. She was talking about it everywhere. One day when she was heading to the library with others she said,

‘When is next Sunday? You know, the twenty eighth of June’

‘We know we know’ Sally and Alicia said at once.

Then Hilda slowly calmed down and started doing her homework. After few hours she was done before the others.

‘I’m going to see if there is a good book’ Hilda said as she went to find a book.

She searched the children’s area but it didn’t seem there was good books there so she went to every bookrack searching for the best book.

‘What is she doing?’ Sally asked.

‘Maybe she is looking something interesting. I’m not going to guess what it is’ said Alicia as they continued their work. And waited until Hilda came.

Meanwhile Hilda was in the last bookshelf of the library. She hasn’t even looked at all the books but she wants to see something exiting. Then she saw a big book in the top of the bookrack. She grabbed a ladder and started climbing. The name was Magical History and Secrets. She pulled the book. It was about two kilograms in weight. Hilda nearly fell of the ladder. What was this gigantic book about? She opened it. There was nothing written in it.

‘Oh, come on...’ she said with a groan.

‘But there must be something special about this. I should take a closer look’ she said to herself.

She climbed the ladder again and searched if there were some kind of note or something in the place the book was. But she couldn’t find anything. She decided not to bring the book back home at once. There was a holiday in August, so she had more time to investigate because there was no school and no homework. But there are not many days. Only a week.

Sally and Alicia were doing their homework and were searching for Hilda.

‘Hilda! Hilda! Where are you?’ shouted Sally and Alicia.

‘Sh... no shouting. This is a library!’ called the librarian angrily.

‘Oh sorry’ said Alicia as they went out searching again.

Hilda heard that and put the book back and ran to the children’s book section. She was pretending like she was reading a book. And then the others found her.

‘Hilda, what’s wrong with you? Why are you reading a book upside down?’ asked Sally.

‘Oh, I was... admiring this picture.’ Said Hilda.

‘I thought you don’t like poetry books’ said Alicia.

‘Never mind. It is getting dark. We should go home’ said Hilda just to avoid saying what she found.

They went home, and Hilda was still thinking about the book. Everyone thought she was thinking about her birthday but they were wrong. That night, Hilda dreamed of the book. Not how to use it or anything. She saw herself looking at the book rack. And she woke up. It was morning.

It was Wednesday. She went to school with others but did not dare say a word about the book. It was hard to keep secrets from her friends and she didn't know the secrets they were hiding for her birthday.

Time went by and Hilda still searching the book if it is there. It was there, safe and sound. She made sure the librarian didn't find her there. She carried a normal book just in case someone found her wandering around. The book she kept was a History book not a magic book.

Then, Saturday evening came. She didn't say a word to anyone about the book. Because she was very excited about her birthday and she almost forgot the book.

She woke up the next day.

'Happy birthday, Hilda,' her mother called.

Alicia and Sally came early to help with the cake. Hilda made it herself. Sally wrote, happy birthday, Hilda, on the cake. And Alicia brought a candle that say thirteen in number. And her birthday party was a success. She had received a lot of presents. Alicia and Sally gave a handmade card and some gifts. Her mother gave her a fiction book. She liked those. Her father gave a camera. She got more but now she was thinking about the book.

The holiday starts from the twenty ninth of June which is tomorrow. Hilda woke up suddenly and realized it was still night. She couldn't sleep after that. Hilda looked at the clock. Two thirty in the morning. She woke up and went to the kitchen to drink some water. She went downstairs to the kitchen and poured herself a glass of water. Suddenly a strange sound came from outside or maybe inside. It was coming from her own mind. A woman screaming for help. Hilda heard a sound

'Come..... save us..... come..... please...' she said. Hilda heard the sound for the second time, then fainted and collapsed to the floor with a loud noise. As she fell, a chair also toppled to the ground. And the glass of water she had been drinking fell to the floor, shattering into pieces even before Hilda fell. Her arm was cut by a piece of glass and was covered in blood. She didn't know anything. But the racket she made seemed to wake up her parents.

'Oh, my girl!' said her mother

Hilda's father carried her into her room and put a plaster on her cut. They tried to wake her up. She did wake up but she only drank some water. She didn't feel well. She didn't even know what happened. Was it a dream? She didn't say anything and went to a deep sleep.

In the morning, she slept more than usual. It was eight o'clock. And Sally and Alicia had to come over and wake her up.

'Wake up, your sleepy head!' said Alicia while Sally pulled Hilda's blanket away.

'Go and have breakfast. We have a lot of things to do today' said Sally.

‘I got something to tell you. It is a secret. Two secrets.’ said Hilda who could not keep her secret any longer.

‘What! Tell us’ said Alicia.

‘I will tell you after we go to the library’ said Hilda.

Then, she went downstairs and had her breakfast. When she was there, Sally and Alicia were discussing what her secret was. Hilda was back after breakfast. Then,

‘Let’s go’ said Sally.

‘Wait. I have got something to get’ said Hilda as she packed her handbag. She put a pencil and a blank book into it.

‘What are those for? You don’t have homework, do you?’ asked Alicia.

‘No’

‘Then, why are you-’ asked Alicia as Hilda.

‘You’ll see’

They went to the library. Hilda found the book in the same place. Hilda was thinking how to say that all and where to start. She took them to the last bookrack of the library which was a bit dark and creepy.

‘Well, you see I saw this book a few days ago. This is um... The Magical History and Secrets. And there is nothing written in this. And I thought we could just have some fun discovering some magic, so... I wanted to surprise you all’ Hilda said while climbing a ladder to the top of the rack.

She pulled out the book and put it on a table nearby. And she showed them the pages. There was nothing written.

‘Why would they put a book with no words here? And what’s the other secret’ asked Alicia.

Hilda explained all, about the woman calling and about the cut in her arm. She tried to explain the whole story but couldn’t remember all. Even the slightest thought scared her.

‘I couldn’t remember what she said though. I only remember “come” and after that I don’t know what happened’

‘Did you tell your parents Hilda?’ asked Sally curiously

‘No’

‘Maybe that was in your mind’ said Alicia.

‘You should see a doctor’ said Sally.

‘No, I should not. By the way, we have more important things to do at the moment’ Hilda said giving the book to Sally.

‘Maybe this is the forgotten section. There might be a lot of books like this. But how come, there are no words in it?’ said Sally.

‘Maybe it is magic. Or we have to do something to make the words appear?’ said Hilda.

‘Did you check the whole book?’ asked Alicia.

‘No’ Hilda replied.

Alicia and Sally looked at each other with a shock.

‘I didn’t want to find everything myself. But I looked at the place the book was and nothing was written there’ said Hilda.

‘Well let’s go through every page, then’ said Sally.

‘There must be thousands of pages’ Alicia said with a groan.

They flipped every page and almost halfway through. A small piece of paper with something written fell into the floor. Unfortunately, a small breeze of wind came and pushed the paper away. It went fast.

‘I got it!’ shouted Hilda.

‘You got what. Shut up will you. This is a lib-’ and just as the librarian was trying to finish her line.

‘Ok, sorry. I won’t do it again’ said Hilda innocently.

The librarian didn’t see what Hilda was holding and went to the other side of the library.

‘Phew. I thought we’d lost it’ said Sally looking at the note.

‘What does it say?’ asked Alicia.

‘Let’s see...’ and Hilda started to read.

Some of the words were a bit blurred but she could read some of it.

Where the Dassel stream ends

The mystery begins

When you faced the dark

The light appears

Weapons are there waiting for you

Use it wise, be careful in there

In the cave known as

Dra ...

It was ripped. What is the cave?

‘And what is Dassel stream? Is it a river?’ asked Sally.

‘Let’s ask someone’ suggested Alicia.

‘Let’s search here. There are a lot of books here. The answer might be right in front of us,’ said Hilda.

‘Ok let’s.... Sally you search the books names for something that says a map or something. And Hilda, you search whether there is a hidden box or something. I will search the next half of the book.’

‘That sounds like a plan’ said Hilda.

They started to search. They searched for about a half an hour. It was ten o’clock. They didn’t stop searching. They searched and searched and finally.....

‘Look, a map!’ Sally said with a shock but it was more like a whisper.

‘Queen’s lane maps of all years’ said Alicia as she rubbed the book cover which was made from a velvet blue fabric. They turned the pages. They found a page about how the Queen’s lane was discovered.

Queen’s lane, also known as Aurora’s hollow was founded in 1870. It was founded by three women who were commonly known as the Aurora flames. Their names were not mentioned. The starting of the city was very simple. Mr. Clank’s hotel was the first hotel opened. The first school was St. Auroras. These three women loved reading and had a great collection of books with them. A few years later, they made a small house to live and donated their big manor also known as Aurora’s palace as a library. They filled it with books and it was the biggest library in the world at the end of the 18’s. Dassel stream goes by Mr. Clank’s hotel. The small house the Aurora flames bought is known to be near Mr. Clank’s hotel. There is a big park beside the stream. Legend has it that the Dassel stream led to the most mysterious places. The Aurora flames decided

They passed the grand library down to many generations. This book will show you the maps and the exact locations of Aurora's hollow from the 1870 to the 2009

'Whoa. I didn't think we'll find all that' said Sally.

'Wait. Are you thinking what I'm thinking?' said Alicia looking at the other two.

'They believed that this library was the Aurora's palace'

'And the librarian is an ancestor of the Aurora flames'

'And Mr. Clank's hotel is right in front of our house'

Sally, Alicia and Hilda said one after another.

'Let's ask her' said Alicia.

'Let's ask her later. I'm starving' said Sally.

'We'll eat right after we take a glance at the map and see where's the cave. And we can go for a snack' said Alicia.

'Yes madam' said Hilda mockingly.

They looked at the map. As they looked through the maps of all years, it seemed like the house the Aurora lighters lived were the exact houses they live now. The three houses might be the three rooms the Aurora flames lived.

'Let's go home and search each other's houses for clues', said Sally.

'Ok' said Alicia and Hilda together.

'But can we please have a snack now?' said Sally as they walked away.

'Wait. I'll write all the clues in case we forgot something.' said Hilda.

'No! someone will find out if you write in English' said Alicia.

'You are right. We will have to make a secret code later. For now, I'll draw'

'Ok. Quick! and let's ask Mrs. Sophie, the librarian about the Auroras Hollow. Let's say it's for a school project if she asks why' said Alicia.

'Ok let's go' said Hilda as she put her pencil and book into her bag.

They found Mrs. Sophie reading a book.

'Um... Mrs. Sophie, I was wondering if you knew something about the Aurora's hollow?' asked Alicia politely.

'I can't tell you everything but I can lend a book about it. I don't remember everything now. I'm getting old you know. Ah let me see. Here it is. History of the Aurora's hollow from the year 1870 onwards. You can take it home if you like. I suppose this is for educational purposes' said Mrs. Sophie.

‘Yes. Thank you. We will take it home on my name’ said Alicia.

‘And I hope you give it back on time safely. You can only have it for two weeks’ she said.

‘Bye Mrs. Sophie’ said Sally.

They went to a café and had milkshake and some cookies. And they went to Hilda’s house and found a note.

‘Dear Hilda,

I’m sorry to say that your father and I had to go visit your grandparents. Your grandfather got ill suddenly and we had to go. Alicia’s parents came along with us too. Sally’s family had to go to the hospital because Sally’s brother Andrew fell off a chair and broke his leg. We will be home by nine o’clock in the night. I hope you three will stay out of trouble.

Love, mom’

‘And that means we can search all three houses’ said Hilda.

They went to Hilda’s house and watched TV. They went to Mr. Clank’s hotel and had lunch. They read the book they brought from the library carefully. They found out that the Aurora flames were magical and were heroes. They saved the city from danger. But what kind of danger. Does that mean there is a thing called magic after all. Why did their parents hate magic? They had a lot of questions but had no one to ask them. They read the book back and fourth and suddenly it started to rain. They can’t go and see where the Dassel stream is now. They could only stay inside until the rain stopped. Suddenly there was a sound of a rat or something near the fireplace. A black rat with a white diamond shaped patches in its head came out of there.

‘What’s that?’ asked Sally.

‘I’ll look’ said Hilda

The floor is wobbly here. Oh! there’s a box inside. And a letter!’ Hilda said as the others came near her.

‘Is that a message from the Aurora flames?’ asked Sally.

‘I think so’ said Alicia.

Hilda unfolded the letter. It was a map. A half of the map. The map showed the cave, about a half. Its name was Dragon’s nest. It showed a village but the words were ripped off. It must be very old. Or can it be from the 18’s. Did the map belong to one of the Aurora flames? What were their names? Did they have a connection with Hilda or Sally or Alicia?

‘Let’s go there tomorrow’ suggested Alicia.

‘No, let’s just visit there for clues. We need more information before we go. We need to know what is out there. By the way, you can clearly see the cave’s name is Dragon’s nest’ said Hilda who had more brains than Alicia.

‘Let’s search my house now. Before anyone come home’ said Sally.

CHAPTER TWO

Didi the rat

They quickly went to Sally's house before they got wet of the rain. They went to Sally's room first.

Sally's room was more organized than expected. She had everything in its place. The floor was shining, books are in order, bags hanged in hooks, shoes are in a line, pens and pencils are in order, bed is clean, folded bedsheets and she even had two book racks full of books. More than a half of her books were educational. She really loved books.

'Oh, I forgot to mop the floor today. Don't mind if it's a bit dirty' said Sally.

Hilda and Alicia looked at each other. They had the same thought that their rooms were like a jungle inside a jungle compared to Sally's room. Hilda suddenly remembered what they are looking for.

'Sally, did you notice something, something odd here' asked Hilda.

'I don't think so. Or maybe...' Sally said as she looked up at the ceiling. There was a crack there.

'I see ghosts come from there at night. And... and they eat all my notes' Sally said quite sadly.

'Don't be ridiculous Sally. It must've been a nightmare' said Alicia.

'Oh yeah, take a look yourself if you are so brave. Hilda and I will leave the room and turn off the lights. Then you will see the ghost come and eat my notes' said Sally.

'Ok. Now go. On the count of three. One... two... three...' Alicia said as she turned off the light and closed the door.

'Oh, and make sure you sit on the bed' said Sally in a distant voice.

Alicia watched and watched for nearly ten minutes. And there came a sound. A creak. No, a tweak. Or maybe a...

'Squeak' hummed a rat.

'Look! Hilda! Sally! Come quickly' shouted Alicia as she ran to the door to open it.

'I told you it was true' said Sally.

'No Sally. Look! That is the rat from Hilda's house. Look! The same rat with the diamond shaped patch' Alicia said proudly.

‘So, your sneaky rat ate my notes?’ said Sally.

‘I’m sorry Miss Sally but it was a nightmare of yours’ said the rat.

‘What! You can talk?’ Sally asked.

‘Who are you talking to Sally? What’s that language you are speaking’ asked Alicia.

‘Can’t you hear that the rat is talking?’ asked Sally more shocked than ever.

‘No Miss Sally. I am sorry to say that only Miss Sally can understand what Didi says. And only Didi and his friends can understand Miss Sally’ the rat said politely.

‘What! So, I can talk to animals?’

‘No, no, no, Miss Sally has misunderstood this. Not all animals can hear Miss Sally. Only the creatures from Mythicloria can hear Miss Sally. Oh, Didi was not supposed to say Miss Sally too much information. Didi is sorry if Didi confused Miss Sally. Didi only says that Miss Sally and her friends must go. And there is a secret in that crack. Didi has completed his work. Didi will go now. Pleasure to meet you Miss Sally’ said Didi the rat.

‘Wait! Didi. Don’t go. Please. I have several questions to ask. Please’ Sally shouted as Didi disappeared.

It seemed right. Hilda and Alicia were standing speechless. Didi was right. But why did Sally could only hear the creatures? What were they from? What was the name? Mythi- what?

‘Sally, what was that? are you Ok?’ asked Hilda immediately.

‘I heard the rat talk. Its name is Didi. He said I could only hear him and he and the other creatures from-’ she stopped in mid-sentence.

‘From where? tell us’ urged Alicia.

‘I don’t remember. It started with a “M” or a “D” and ended with a “Y” or an “A” I just can’t remember’ Sally said as she sat down in her bed.

‘Oh, that’s ok. The good thing is you can talk to animals’ said Hilda sitting beside Sally.

‘Only magical animals I suppose so’ Sally said sadly.

‘What’s the bad thing?’ asked Alicia.

‘I didn’t say there was a bad thing’ said Hilda.

‘Oh really? I can tell you several bad things if you want. First thing is... HILDA I’m talking to YOU! You will be hearing sounds again this week. I’m not trying to tell fortunes but that will happen. And that rat is not going to talk to us even if it could. And that the mysterious book you found in the library is still blank, I suppose. And next week Monday school starts. Is that enough’ Alicia said in a rush.

‘Whoa, Whoa, Alicia don’t go mad. Holiday has just started. We have more than six days said Hilda.

‘It’s getting dark. We should stop investigating now and start freshly tomorrow’ suggested Sally.

‘Okay, And Sally, did the rat tell you something else?’ asked Alicia.

‘Oh, yes. Didi said he came to tell me that there is a secret in that crack over there’ said Sally pointing to the crack in the ceiling.

‘How do you think we are going to get up there?’ asked Alicia.

‘Hmmm... Sally, can you call Didi?’ asked Hilda.

‘I don’t think so. But I’ll try’ said Sally.

‘Didi, can you hear me?’ said Sally.

‘Um Sally, I don’t think that worked because we heard you’ said Alicia.

‘Oh’ said Sally.

‘Okay. I will climb on to Sally’s bed and try to reach’ said Alicia.

‘Nope. Not working’ said Alicia.

‘Wait. I think I need to go to the bathroom. Be right back’ and Alicia ran off.

Sally followed.

‘I need to drink a cup of water. You can come down if you feel alone Hilda’ Sally said as she went down the stairs.

‘Pity that I can’t speak to anyone special’ thought Hilda.

‘Actually, you can... Here you go... the secret from the crack... you wanted it. Didn’t you? Please come quickly... come... come...come...’ came the same sound from the night Hilda fainted.

And the secret was the other half of the map. Hilda grabbed it tightly but her vision blurred. She fainted once again. Hilda heard a scream of a young girl her age scream. It was quite familiar. And she heard someone say her name. Looks like Alicia was right.

‘HILDA! HILDA! Wake up’ shouted Sally and Alicia.

‘We were afraid you died’ Sally said.

‘Don’t be stupid Sally’ snapped Alicia.

‘What happened?’ asked Hilda.

‘We are the one who should ask you what happened’ said Sally.

‘That is quite right. Well I got this map. And the sound said something. It said “come” and I don’t remember any other from that and a girl screaming’ said Hilda pointing the map towards Alicia.

‘Aha I said that you will hear that sound. Didn’t I?’ said Alicia proudly.

‘I’m going to have dinner and go to sleep. Who is coming with me?’ shouted Hilda.

‘Ok, Let’s go. Mystery awaits’ said Alicia.

They went downstairs and found a packet of fresh milk and some vegetables.

‘Let’s make sandwiches’ said Sally.

‘Where’s the bread?’ asked Hilda.

‘There is none. Is there?’ Alicia said sadly.

‘I’ll go and buy some’ said Hilda.

‘Oh, no, no, no, you are not going anywhere. You will faint again. Alicia go’ said Sally.

Alicia bought a loaf of bread and came quickly. They made sandwiches and drank some warm milk. They all curled up in Sally’s bed which was quite big and went to sleep. Their parents came home but not Sally’s because Sally’s brother had to take some more treatment.

The next morning, they slept until ten o’clock. No one called them. That was strange. They all went downstairs and went to their houses. Sally went to Hilda’s house. They had breakfast and got dressed. Suddenly Hilda remembered they had a lot of homework to do in the holidays. They had to write five essays and do a long sheet of math problems and many more.

‘Sally, did you do the homework?’ asked Hilda.

‘No. But I did write two of the essays. And I don’t think it’s good so, I’ll start again’ said Sally.

‘Do you think you have time to do all that?’ Hilda asked curiously.

‘Yes. If I spend this entire day on it’ said Sally.

‘Let’s go and ask Alicia if she wanted to come to the library and do the homework with us’ suggested Hilda.

They went to Alicia’s house and saw her watching a film in the TV. It looked interesting. So Hilda and Sally forgot what they came for and sat down beside Alicia and watched the film. It was about dragons. It was great but dragons did not exist. It went on about four hours. It was that long because there were commercial adds popping every five minutes. The film ended. And just after that, their favorite cartoon started. They watched it for two minutes and there was a power cut.

‘Oh no, now how are we going to watch it. By the way guys why did you come in the first place?’ asked Alicia.

‘Oh, we were going to tell you that there were a lot of homeworks to do and if you wanted to come and do it with us in the library’ said Hilda.

‘Um... I think it’s too late to go now’ said Sally.

‘Let’s wake up early tomorrow and do it’ suggested Hilda.

‘We’d better do the homework fast because we’ve got to find what’s behind the voices Hilda hears’ said Alicia coldly.

The next day they woke up early and did their homework. There were a lot to do than expected. They did them anyway. The whole day was over.

‘I have a crazy idea’ said Alicia.

‘What? It is better not to be too extreme’ said Sally, annoyed.

‘Let’s go to that cave. I mean we still have time for dinner. Who’s with me?’ said Alicia.

‘Are you crazy?’ shouted Hilda.

‘I told you before I said what the idea was’, snapped Alicia.

‘Fine. If you really want to go. But we are only taking a look. Okay?’ said Hilda.

‘Yes’ said Alicia.

‘NO!!’ said Sally.

They went to Mr. Clank’s hotel. But there was no sign of any stream.

‘Oh, where is it?’ said Alicia.

‘Maybe we shouldn’t look right in front of the hotel. Let’s go to the kitchen. I saw a chef go out from the back door in the kitchen’ said Sally.

‘Why didn’t you tell us before? And how are we going to get there?’ asked Alicia.

‘Let’s say-’ just as Hilda tried to say something.

‘May I help you three?’ a waiter holding the menu came forward and asked.

Hilda had a brilliant idea.

‘Yes please. I want to know what’s in the back yard of this place’ said Hilda.

‘Oh yes. There’s nothing much but there is a picnic area. People usually come here to have picnics. You can go if you like. And free milkshakes for you’ said the waiter.

They went to the back yard. It was beautiful. They could see the Dassel stream flowing. It was sparkling. The waiter came back with some chocolate milkshakes. He put them down on a small table and said.

‘Enjoy!’ and he went.

‘Mm... this is yummy’ said Sally as she gulped the whole milkshake in one go.

‘Let’s go’ said Hilda.

‘Are we really going? I just said that for fun’ said Alicia.

‘Yes, but if don’t want to-’ as Hilda tried to finish.

‘Let’s go!!!!’ shouted Alicia.

They went to the stream. It was so dazzling. No wonder it’s name is Dassel stream. It seemed to go long.

‘Now how are we going to get to the END of Dassel stream?’ said Sally.

‘Can’t you just call an animal or something?’ said Alicia.

‘I don’t think we need to. Look! A boat’ shouted Hilda.

‘Seriously? This is much harder than walking, I’d rather walk. If you want to go on that thing you can go’ said Alicia.

Sally and Hilda stepped onto the boat. It didn’t do anything. And there were two oars inside. It had a diamond marking. By the way Alicia walked about seven meters by now. And suddenly there was a sound. And a sparkle. The boat went magically and fast. It catches up with Alicia.

‘Wait for me.....’ Alicia shouted.

They all got into the boat. It went fast and fast like there were more miles to go. Sally was feeling ill.

‘Guys, I think I’m sea sick’ said Sally.

‘How can you say you are sea sick. You’re not even near a sea’ said Alicia.

‘How can we stop this? Um... STOP!!!’ Hilda shouted.

Her voice sounded like an echo and the boat stopped. They waited there a little while.

‘GO!’ shouted Hilda.

‘How did you control it?’ asked Alicia.

‘How am I supposed to know? If you are that curious try it yourself’ snapped Hilda.

‘SLOW DOWN!’ shouted Alicia as the boat slowed down.

‘It worked’ said Alicia.

They went many more miles and stopped in a random place. This time they didn’t say stop. The boat stopped by itself. Sally, Hilda and Alicia got off the boat. Then the boat sunk down to the bottom of the stream. There were no holes in the boat. All of a sudden, the rat appeared.

‘Hello Didi’ said Sally with a voice that only Didi could hear.

‘Oh, pleasure to meet Miss Sally again. What brings Miss Sally here?’ Didi asked.

‘My friend Hilda is hearing sounds of someone and fainted. So, we just came to see if there’s something connected to the voice in here’ said Sally.

‘Well, Didi cannot speak a word about the um... magic but, Didi can tell that the voice is connected to something. Didi is sorry he cannot say anything about- Oh, look at the time, Sally and her friends should go now’ said Didi and he faded away.

‘What did that thing say?’ asked Alicia.

‘Don’t call him “that thing” and Didi said we should go now’ said Sally.

‘He is right. We’ll come back tomorrow’ said Hilda.

‘Where’s the boat?’ Alicia asked from Hilda.

‘Don’t know’

‘How are we getting back now?’ asked Alicia.

‘How am I supposed to know?’ said Hilda.

‘Calm down. Look! There is the boat’ said Sally.

The boat was there but it was destroyed. They don’t know how it happened. They saw it sink to the bottom of the river and now it’s under a tree. How is this possible?

‘Let’s walk’ suggested Alicia.

‘Are you kidding me?’ asked Hilda.

‘Yes’

They walked along the stream. They thought it will take days to get to the back yard of Mr. Clank’s hotel but it seems that the time has decided to go very fast.

They arrived at the back yard of Mr. Clank’s hotel by seven o’clock. They didn’t have a watch but there was a clock hanging in the hotel. They quickly went back home. Unfortunately, things were not going to happen like they imagine.

‘YOU THREE!!! Where have you been? We were so worried’ that was Hilda’s mother Mrs. Marta’s voice.

‘We um... we...’ said Hilda, Sally and Alicia struggling to speak.

‘Well, your parents and I agreed that you are not allowed to-’ said Mrs. Marta.

‘Not allowed to what?’ interrupted Hilda.

‘You are not allowed to stay away from home after six o’clock in this holiday. Unless-’ said Mrs. Marta.

‘Unless what?’ interrupted Alicia.

‘Nevermind. Go to your houses and have dinner’ demanded Mrs. Marta.

‘Okay’ Alicia, Sally and Hilda said in a tiny voice.

Now they can’t stay out after six o’clock. But only in this holiday. The half of the holiday is over now. But in about four days, they’ll have to go to school again.

CHAPTER THREE

The Misunderstanding

The next morning Hilda wanted to go to the library. She asked her mother if she could. Miraculously, she said yes. But, Hilda decided to go to library with Sally and Alicia. Hilda remembered the book they borrowed from the library History of Aurora's hollow.

'It's boring' said Alicia.

'Same' said Sally and Hilda.

'Let's go home and watch a movie or something' suggested Alicia.

'Hang on, Let's go to the Dassel stream. I promise we can go home before five o'clock' said Hilda.

They went to Mr. Clank's hotel and ate some cookies. Then, they went to the back yard secretly and found that the boat which was destroyed yesterday, was fixed now. They jumped in and went on for a few minutes and now they could see a cave. It was about a size of a peanut from where they were.

'Is that Dragon's nest?' asked Sally.

'I think so' said Alicia.

'Look! A message in a bottle' shouted Sally.

'Got it!' said Alicia.

'What does it say?' asked Hilda.

""Find the key?" I don't think this is much important. I'll throw it back' said Alicia.

'Look! It's happening' shouted Hilda.

'The words are appearing' said Sally grabbing the soaked note.

The key is in the cave where a guardian is there. The entrance is underwater but you will find a way. Good luck!

'Let's go' said Hilda.

'What if there is a real-life dragon there?' asked Sally.

'I don't think so' said Hilda.

They went to the cave's entrance; it wasn't under water. Maybe there is another entrance. Or was it a mistake? Suddenly, a loud scream rang out. It was Sally.

'L...l...LOOK!!! A d...d...dragon' shouted Sally.

There was a dragon alright. But it was asleep. Asleep until Sally shouted. A bluish dragon. Or maybe its white. It sparkles sometimes. And a roar came from it. Before anyone could react, the dragon came face to face with them. It pushed Sally into the stream. Sally can't swim. And when Alicia tried to help her the dragon pushed Alicia into the stream too. Hilda saw that. She jumped to the stream and tried to help them but Alicia pushed her away. They all got out of the stream and ran away from the dragon.

'YOU!!' shouted Alicia.

'Why?' said Hilda.

'Now you are asking why you pushed us into the stream' said Alicia.

'No. I didn't. How could I do that?' said Hilda.

'I don't know but we are leaving' said Alicia.

'Sally, you saw I didn't push you, right?' asked Hilda.

But even before Sally could answer, Alicia grabbed her hand and began to walk away. Hilda sat down on the spot and began to cry. She cried for about a half an hour. And she heard a voice. It was not the one who told her to 'come'. It was a cruel voice.

'Ha... ha ha ha..... good luck talking to them now. Ha... ha ha ha' the voice faded away laughing.

Hilda fainted at the spot. She couldn't feel anything for a while. Suddenly something big and warm approached her. The dragon. It sniffed Hilda's head and with a gasp, Hilda woke up.

'Aaaaaagh' shouted Hilda.

'Wait. Hilda' said the dragon.

'You can talk?' asked Hilda calming down.

'Only to *dragontongues*' said the dragon.

'Can Sally hear you?' asked Hilda.

'No' said the Dragon.

'Why did you push my friends into the stream?' asked Hilda.

'There is a long story I have to tell you' said the dragon.

'Go on' said Hilda.

‘First of all, I am Zinya. The dragon of water and crystals and the guardian of the key. You can talk to me because you have the ability to talk to dragons. Dragons are not a part of Mythicloria. They can enter though. You might be thinking if I am reading your mind. Yes, I can. I am the only dragon who can read minds. And sorry for the accident I caused for your friends. I thought you were intruders, but after I saw you I read your mind and found out you came for a mission. But I want to know why were you crying and why did your friends leave?’ said the dragon.

‘Oh, they said I pushed them. And before you came sniffing me, I heard a voice laughing’ said Hilda, still filled with tears.

‘I think this is a plan of the Queen of Darkness’ said the dragon, trying to sit near Hilda.

‘The who?’ Hilda asked in a shock.

‘The Queen of Darkness, Evyana. She was trapped by her own spell. Her own fault. She tried to kill the Aurora flames. She succeeded but the Aurora flames’ souls are still trapped somewhere in Mythicloria. You heard Evyana of course. I think she made an illusion to break trust between you and your friends and stop you from getting into Mythicloria and setting the Aurora flames free’ said the dragon.

‘Can I save them? Alone?’ asked Hilda.

‘No. If a human wants to enter Mythicloria there has to be exact three people. But wizards from Mythicloria can go in or out when ever they like. You can’t go alone. There are rules you know. You can’t change them. By the way, I can show you what I can do for a change’ said the dragon.

‘Okay’ said Hilda.

The sparkling blue dragon flew into the sky like a bullet. Her sapphire blue eyes still looking at Hilda. Zinya breathed fire. No, it was crystals. She made a beautiful crystal chair for Hilda. And a giant chair right beside it for herself.

‘Wow’ said Hilda.

‘See? This is Magic.’ said Zinya.

‘Can you give me the key?’ asked Hilda.

‘No. Rules are rules. I can’t explain them all. I think I had the whole rulebook. Come with me’ said Zinya.

‘Wait. Where are you going? Underwater?’ asked Hilda.

‘Oh, right. You can’t hold breath like me, I forgot. *Schiwimmen!*’ said Zinya.

‘What was that?’ asked Hilda.

‘A spell. Now, you can swim and talk without struggling to breath’ said Zinya.

And so, it did. Hilda swam down and down into the stream. Zinya followed. The stream became bigger and bigger and darker and darker.

‘*Licht*’ said Zinya and her horns, wings and tail began to glow.

‘Wow’ said Hilda who was astonished at the moment.

They went to a cave. There were a lot of books there. Even though they were in water, the ink didn’t fade. There were a lot of books. Stories, Law, Magic and even Mathematics.

‘Um... Zinya, why do you have a Mathematics book?’ asked Hilda.

‘Oh, I borrowed that book from my friend Kaya. She said this was interesting but I don’t understand anything. Aha! Here it is. ***Law of Mythiclora***’

‘How did you made light appear? How do these books stay undamaged underwater? I have a lot of questions’ said Hilda in a rush.

‘I’ll tell you later. But there are things I’m forbidden to talk about. Here is the book. You can only read it underwater because of it’s special power’ said Zinya.

‘Can we go up now?’ asked Hilda.

‘You don’t want to know about the law?’ asked Zinya.

‘No’ said Hilda.

They went to the top of the stream. Hilda was still a bit sad. How can she tell to Alicia and Sally she didn’t push them? Would they believe? With wet clothes, Hilda begun to cry again.

‘*Trocken*’ said Zinya, and Hilda’s wet clothes has been dried in a second.

‘Don’t worry. You try to talk to them. I’m sure they’ll understand’ said Zinya.

‘You’re right. Thank you Zinya’ said Hilda and she hugged the giant beast.

‘I’ve got to go now. It’s five o’clock. I still have to walk all the way back to Mr. Clank’s hotel’ said Hilda.

‘I’ll give you a lift’ said Zinya.

Hilda climbed onto Zinya’s back. Zinya started to fly over the Dassel stream and landed near the backyard of Mr. Clank’s hotel.

‘I’ll leave you here. Hope you’ll come again next time with your friends. If you ever need a lift. Call my name and I’ll be here’ said Zinya and she flew away slowly.

‘Bye Zinya’

‘Bye Hilda’

Hilda went home, had dinner and went to bed. She couldn't sleep. She kept thinking about Zinya and what she said. Maybe there was a villain. How can she tell the others? The next morning, she met Sally and Alicia in the library.

'Um... Alicia? Sally?' said Hilda.

'What?' said Alicia angrily.

'I didn't push you. I swear. The dragon did. She told me many things. There is a villain. Her name is Evyana. She killed the Aurora flames and trapped their souls and and...' said Hilda.

'We are not believing *you!*' said Alicia.

'FINE! Don't believe *me!* I thought you were my *friends*. I'm going' said Hilda as she burst into tears and got away from the library.

'Sally, do you trust *her?*' asked Alicia.

'Yes' said Sally.

'Why?' asked Alicia.

'Because she's our friend' said Sally.

'You are right. Where do you think she went?' asked Alicia.

'To her house perhaps' said Sally.

'Let's go' said Alicia.

They went to Hilda's house but her mother said Hilda said she was with her friend and she looked quite dull. So, Alicia and Sally had to go to the Dragon's nest to find out. But Hilda was already there.

'Zinya!!!' called Hilda and the blue dragon came soaring from the sky.

'What did they say?' asked Zinya as Hilda climbed on to Zinya's back.

'They said they don't believe me' said Hilda full with tears.

Just as they flew away, Alicia and Sally came bursting through the back door of the hotel. They saw Hilda flying on top of the dragon. They got a bit scared.

'Is that Hilda?' asked Sally.

'I think so' said Alicia.

'I think the dragon captured her' said Sally.

'Let's go before it eats Hilda' said Alicia.

'Where's that stupid boat?' said Alicia.

'There!' said Sally pointing at it.

They got on it but it didn't go fast. It didn't go automatically. It didn't obey Alicia nor Sally. It just stayed there. After several minutes, they started to row the boat. It went slower than a snail. At last they reached Dragon's nest but at the moment, the dragon and Hilda both jumped into Dassel stream.

'Aaaagggghh' said Sally.

'NO!!! it is going to eat Hilda' said Alicia.

Suddenly, Hilda heard someone calling her name. She ignored it but she heard it again and again. She looked up to see who was calling but unfortunately, she heard the good voice in her ear.

'Come... You are close... come... come...' said the voice and Hilda fainted underwater.

Zinya spotted her quickly and grabbed her and flew up to the sky and landed near Alicia and Sally. Zinya was holding Hilda in her big, blue sparkling hands.

'I told you!!! It killed Hilda!!!' said Sally.

Zinya waved her head as if she was saying no. she couldn't talk to them but could read their minds. However, Alicia and Sally thought Hilda had fainted because of the voice. If only they could talk to Zinya. Zinya roared at Hilda in a small voice.

'Zinya? Is that you?' said Hilda.

'Yes' said Zinya although the others couldn't hear her.

Hilda got up and completely ignored Sally and Alicia. She sat down and started to talk to Zinya. No one could hear. Only them. Hilda spoke in a dragon voice. And she cried too. She didn't even notice her friends.

'Hilda' said Alicia as Hilda turned her head slowly.

Hilda looked at Zinya. Zinya nodded. And Hilda turned her head towards Alicia and tried to guess what she will tell next. It was so obvious that she would say sorry.

'Sorry Hilda. I'm really sorry' said Alicia.

'Me too. And I'm glad you're OK' said Sally.

'Hm...' said Hilda.

'Are you angry?' asked Alicia but there was no reply from Hilda. She looked at Zinya.

Alicia hugged Hilda, Sally joined too. Hilda stopped crying too. Zinya cuddled them all tightly. Zinya let out a small snort.

'So, tell me... tell us what you said earlier' said Alicia.

'This is Zinya. Dragon of water and crystals and also guardian of the keys' said Hilda.

'Can she hear us?' asked Alicia.

‘Yes’ said Hilda.

‘Why can’t I talk to her?’ asked Sally.

‘Zinya is not from Mythicloria. And Zinya? Can you do a spell to make them talk dragon?’ said Hilda but the last bit was unclear.

‘*Dovahzul*. Hello Sally and Alicia. Talk to me fast because the magic will run out in five minutes.’ said Zinya.

‘Wow’ said Alicia.

‘Amazing’ said Sally.

‘Who is Evyana again?’ asked Hilda.

‘Evyana is the most cruel and selfish witch I’ve ever seen. Not to mention her mother, Elvira. Evyana is known as the Queen of darkness. She betrayed her own friends for power. As I told Hilda, there must be exact three people to enter Mythicloria but she broke that rule and you can’t destroy anyone just for fun; She broke that rule too. Killing the Aurora flames. She got herself into an unforgiveable crime. She was locked in the prison of Dumenza for many years. She somehow broke free. She might still try to go back in time and save her mother. According to the Law of Mythicloria there is a statement that say “no witch or wizard is allowed to time travel and save a human from death” anyway I know she’ll do it’

‘How do you time travel?’ asked Alicia.

‘I don’t remember how. But there is a way. It can be anywhere. I think it was a stone or something. If Evyana gets her cruel hands on it and try to get her mother Elvira back’ said Zinya.

‘What are we going to do?’ asked Sally.

‘I think you will have to go to Mythicloria and free the Aurora flames. Maybe you will need to learn a spell or two before that’ said Zinya.

‘Why do we need to learn SPELLS?’ asked Alicia.

‘Mythicloria is not as good as you think. Many people try to go in but can’t get out’ said Zinya.

‘So, who are we learning from?’ asked Hilda.

‘Me’ said Zinya.

‘You???’ said them all together.

‘We can’t talk to you’ said Alicia.

‘There is a way to talk dragon but-’ Zinya stopped in mid-sentence.

‘Why did you stop?’ asked Sally.

‘I think it’s a bit dangerous. It’s much easier with a simple charm’ said Zinya.

‘Why is it that dangerous?’ asked Hilda.

‘I don’t want to say why. Just don’t go running away to find the ingredients for the dragon tongue potion. Oh, I said it. Oops. Just think that I didn’t say anything’ said Zinya.

‘How to make a Dragontongue potion?’ asked Sally.

‘She knows, she just doesn’t want to tell’ said Alicia.

‘Fine. I’ll tell you. You need a hair of the ones who need to talk to the dragon, water of Dassel stream, blue potatoes, golden rose petal and finally a four-leaf clover. I know right? It seems hard to find. Nevermind’ said Zinya.

‘Noted’ said Sally who was writing the list of ingredients.

‘But where are you going to find them? You don’t even know how to make a potion’ said Zinya.

‘You know’ said Hilda.

‘Yes, indeed but it’s a dangerous journey’ said Zinya.

‘Please.....’ said Hilda.

‘Alrighty then. Blue potatoes are in my garden. My friend Kaya has a patch of golden roses and my friend Yuzu has a maze of four-leaf clovers’ said Zinya.

‘And??’ asked Alicia.

‘I’ll ask them to bring them to you’ said Zinya.

‘Today?’ asked Sally.

‘Yes’ said Zinya.

Now the five minutes was over. Now only Hilda and Zinya could talk with each other. Zinya grabbed a paper and started to write. Zinya didn’t need a pen. She put her finger to the ink bottle and wrote with her long nails. Two pieces of paper were full with messy claw writing now.

Dear Kaya,

Can you bring a petal of a golden rose? I need it straight away. I’ll be waiting

Zinya

Dear Yuzu,

Can you bring a four-leaf clover to me? It’s some urgent business. I’ll be waiting

Zinya

Zinya rolled the paper and threw it away. The wind took it. What if Kaya and Yuzu don't get it? After a few minutes Kaya and Yuzu appeared with a golden rose petal and a four-leaf clover. Kaya was bright red. She had flaming red hair and wings. Kaya had bright yellow eyes. Yuzu was bigger than Kaya and Zinya. He was completely black with silver hair and wings. He had gray eyes. They were shocked to see Hilda, Sally and Alicia. But they were calmer after recognizing Hilda was a *dragontongue*.

'Hello Zinya and human beings' said Yuzu.

'Konichiwa Zinya. Ahem, sorry I forgot you spoke English' said Kaya with a Japanese accent.

'I wanted those things to teach these girls *dragontongue* and I knew you guys had the ingredients and also I forgot who was supposed to drink the potion' said Zinya.

'If a dragontongue potion is made, the dragon who wants to speak to the human should drink it. Thank goodness we came or else what will happen to these poor girls' said Yuzu.

'Can we start?' asked Hilda.

'Yes' said the dragons.

'But first. *Dovahzul*' said Yuzu.

'What were you talking about?' asked Sally.

'We were going to make the potion' said Kaya.

They found a blue potato in Zinya's garden and a big pot too. Kaya made a fire and put the pot on top. They put all the ingredients to the pot and started mixing with a stick. At last they put a strand of Alicia's and Sally's hair. Now, the potion was ready. It was bubbling green. It looked disgusting.

'So, who will have to drink it' asked Alicia.

'Me' said Zinya.

'Why did we make this in the first place?' asked Yuzu.

'Because if these three are going to save the Aurora flames, they'll have to enter Mythicloria and if they enter Mythicloria it wouldn't be easy to get to the place the Aurora flames are trapped. No one knows that. And Evyana could be anywhere and what if they try to kill these poor innocent kids. So, that is why I have decided to teach them some spells and charms' said Zinya.

'I'll help too. But I am staying dragon' said Yuzu.

'Me too' said Kaya.

'Ok then. I am going to drink this' said Zinya grabbing the pot.

‘Wait! What happens to Zinya after drinking this? And how do we bring back her again?’ asked Hilda.

‘Oh, I don’t know what happens to her but we can bring her back by making the same potion’ said Kaya.

‘Here I go... on three... one... two... three.....’ said Zinya as she drank it all up.

CHAPTER FOUR

Whispershade

What could happen? She stood there as a dragon for a few minutes but nothing seemed to be happening. What will they do now? Wait! Something's happening. Zinya is changing. A blast of wind came and Zinya soared up in to the air. She turned into..... a human! Zinya is a human now!

'Wow' said everyone.

Zinya looked beautiful. She appeared with a blue and white dress and her sapphire eyes didn't change. Her hair was blue and purple like before. Zinya was stunned. She was taller than Hilda and her friends. Even though she was a hundred and ten years old, she looked very young.

'Zinya!' said Hilda running forward and hugging her.

'I want to be human too' shouted Kaya.

'Ok. I'll start teaching today. You all will have to call me professor Zinya' said Zinya proudly.

Zinya could still use her powers. With a flick of her finger, three chairs, three tables, a blackboard, chalk, pens, ink, papers and everything in a classroom appeared. The blackboard was hanging midair.

'Okay class. Get ready' called Zinya.

'How are they going to do magic without any wands?' asked Kaya.

'That's true. Where are we going to find wands?' asked Zinya.

'Maybe if they go to Whispershade?' said Yuzu.

'That's a great idea. They can get their wands and brooms and books and all' said Kaya.

'Can they enter it? I mean they say only a witch or wizard can enter. Even we can't go there. And I bet Evyana might be hiding there at the moment' said Yuzu.

'They can try. I mean Evyana can't kill them. I just know it' said Zinya.

'What are you three talking about?' asked Alicia.

'We were talking about you guys; getting your wands and books before we start our lesson' said Zinya.

‘Where are we going to get them?’ asked Sally.

‘From *Whispershade*’ said Zinya.

‘Whisper what?’ asked Hilda.

‘Whispershade. It’s a hidden city where witches get their power. Wands, books and things. You’ll need them’ said Zinya as the two dragons nodded.

‘Where do we get to Whispershade?’ asked Alicia.

‘From my cave’ said Zinya.

‘How?’ asked Sally.

‘We don’t know. Only a true witch can enter. I think you all can go. Be careful’ said Zinya.

Zinya went inside her cave. Hilda, Sally and Alicia followed. She turned around. She was going to leave.

‘Go until you meet the falls. Be careful!’ said Zinya and she disappeared.

Zinya’s cave was Quite too long. They went as far as they could. It wasn’t dark in there. it was filled with crystals. Shinning and glittering. Dassel stream was still flowing beside them. At last, they reached the waterfall. This was where the Dassel stream starts. And suddenly the waterfall started to talk.

‘Who dare come to Whispershade?’ it said with a dark tone.

‘I’m Hilda Blaze. And these are my friends Sally Vale and Alicia Rave. We came to-’ Hilda said but the waterfall interrupted her.

‘Blaze, Vale and Rave you say? Pleasure to meet you young wizards. You may enter’ said the waterfall clearing a way to let them in.

Alicia went first. Then Hilda and Sally. They went through a dark tunnel. And a light appeared. The poem from the book with no words was right. If you faced the dark, the light appears. The bright light almost made them blind; and the tunnel stopped. They fell to the ground, one on top of another.

‘Ow... Alicia you stepped on my hand’

‘It wasn’t me. Whose leg is on the top of my head?’

‘Look! There’s Didi’ said Sally.

‘Hello Miss Sally and friends. I think you all came to pick your stuff. Didi can’t show Miss Sally the way. Didi is sorry. Miss Sally can go straight, turn right from the oak tree, turn left from the talking apple tree and go to the big dark cave. The cave has everything. Congratulations to Miss Sally and your friends ’said Didi and he vanished away.

‘What did he say?’ asked Alicia.

‘He said go straight, turn right, turn left and go inside a dark cave’ said Sally.

‘What if Evyana comes from there?’ asked Alicia.

‘It’s Fine... Just don’t worry and go’ said Hilda.

They went straight. They went on for about one kilometer and turned right from the oak tree and after that, they saw the talking apple tree. It was fast asleep. Hilda and Sally tried to sneak away but Alicia couldn’t resist. She poked the tree and it woke up with a loud roar.

‘Who dare poke me? INTROUDERS!!! Help!!!’ shouted the apple tree.

‘We are just here to pick up our wands and stuff’ said Alicia.

‘What are your names?’ asked the tree.

‘Well I’m Alicia Rave and-’ The tree stopped her before she could finish.

‘Rave you say? What luck for me! I’m sure your friends are Blaze and Vale. Brilliant! You may go’ said the tree.

‘How did you know?’ asked Alicia.

‘Everyone knows’ said the tree.

‘What?’ said Alicia as they started to walk away.

‘See you’ said the apple tree.

At last, they saw a cave. It was dark indeed. They went inside but nothing happened. Sally began to cry.

‘I think we are lost’ said Sally.

‘Nah’ said Hilda, leaning over the wall.

In the wall, there was a secret button. Hilda accidentally pressed it. She, Alicia and Sally slide down on separate paths. Hilda could hear the screaming of Sally. Before Hilda could say anything, she landed in a room; a secret room. It was dark and gloomy. It looked very frightening.

Hilda felt as if she was not the only one in that room. She felt something warm. Or maybe it was cold. An eerie sound came from behind her. She felt like two hands were touching her shoulder.

‘At last... You came... I was wondering where you’d be... I was counting days and nights to the day you’d come...’ said a creepy voice.

‘Who are you and what do you want’ Hilda said awkwardly.

‘Ha... ha... ha... Get ready to run for your life’ said the creepy voice.

Hilda turned around. There she saw a woman. She was very pale. Both her eyes and lips were blood red. Her hair was gray. She was wearing a blood red robe that matched her eyes. She

looked old. About five hundred years or maybe more. She took out a wand that looked about twelve inches long. It was made from bones. Some sort of bones. It had the letter “E” on it. She raised her hand and started to say something.

‘*Koroso*’ she stopped looking at Hilda.

‘So, Evyana? What brings you here? I think I should call the guards of Dumenza? I think I should *Suitchi!*’ shouted the person pointing her own wand and the dark witch’s wand was in Hilda’s hand.

‘*Dumenza keisatsu*’ she said as the guards of Dumenza appeared.

‘Thank you very much Mrs. Rizal and oh my god is this Hilda?’ said the guard.

‘Yes’ said Hilda.

‘Congratulations’ said the guard as he grabbed the dark witch’s wand and went away.

‘Was that Evyana?’ asked Hilda.

‘Yes indeed. If I didn’t come you should have been dead right here. I’m Rozina Rizal, I work in the Order of Mystery. It’s like the Department. I’m a flame. It means I help destroy and catch bad witches and wizards. I usually keep an eye on Whispershade’ said Mrs. Rizal.

‘Why did she want to kill me?’ asked Hilda in a shock.

‘You might know she is searching the time turner at the moment. Luckily, she didn’t well-um... found it yet. She wants to bring her mother Elvira after she found the time turner. Evyana is very old. A normal witch can live up to four hundred and ninety-nine years. Evyana here is about six hundred now. She helps on souls to keep herself alive and young. When three full moons are past the souls will fade away. Did you see her hair was gray? Her target was you and your friends. I think it’s your luck that saved you all. She knew you were going to be an official witch today. If you had power, it would be hard for her to find the time turner. They say there are three time turners... One in this area and one in Japan and the other is in Germany’ said Mrs. Rizal.

‘Wow. Am I really going to be a witch? That’s brilliant! And where are Sally and Alicia? Are they Ok?’ said Hilda.

‘Yes, and Yes. They are fine. And I suppose you came for a big moment of your life. So, I’ll leave you to it. If you ever need me, just write a letter and roll it and throw it into the sky. The wind will know where to find me. Bye’ said Mrs. Rizal and with a flick of her finger, she vanished.

‘Phew. That was quite exiting’ thought Hilda.

She saw a blast of sparkles heading her way. She closed her eyes tightly. When she opened her eyes, there were about hundred wands floating around her. She went to touch the one made of firewood, but it fell to the floor as she approached it. She too it as a sign that it was not right. She went for wands made from maple, mahogany, cherry wood, pine and even a full gold wand. There weren’t much left. And finally, she looked at a wand made from oak that had a handle of a sapphire gemstone. There was a note that it contained ten petals of a golden rose. There was beautiful gold

twisted lines on the oak part of it. It looked quite beautiful compared to the others. Hilda looked back. She knew she wasn't cut out to be a witch. She was scared. She sat down in the middle of the wands and all the floating wands dropped to the ground. But one wand still kept floating. It flowed right into Hilda's hand. Hilda felt a warmth. She waved it. All the other wands disappeared. She was now at the same gloomy place she landed before. And there, there was a dark blue robe, a dark blue witch's hat, some books all covered in velvet blue fabric. There was a side bag nearby. Hilda put on the robe and hat. It fit perfectly to her. She once again felt a warmth. She put the heavy books into the side bag. Then a chair appeared nearby. Hilda sat on it without even thinking. She heard a sound. Of a girl. She sounded just like her. She looked like a ghost. She looked just like Hilda

'Hilda... Congratulations! You might be thinking who I am. I am Liora. I'm your sister Hilda. I died when you were one year old. I was fourteen when I died. I was waiting for you in this very place where I became a witch. When I saw Evyana get to you, I couldn't do anything, so I shouted very hard. I think you didn't hear me because you were in the line of life and death. I was killed by Evyana. I was trapped in the wand of that stupid Evyana for years. I couldn't help it. But when you held it, I felt warmth and I felt something familiar. I escaped. And Hilda, I promise I'll stay by your side no matter what happens' said Liora, hugging Hilda.

It was strange. Ghosts couldn't touch humans. So, what was Liora? She has no color, looks exactly like a ghost.

'I exist as a memory of yours. Only you can see or hear me' said Liora.

'Ok. Do you know where to get out?' asked Hilda.

'Just say "*entrance*" waving your wand from left to right' said Liora.

'*entrance*' said Hilda and she was at the place they started. Alicia and Sally were already there. Alicia's everything was violet. Her wand was a mahogany. It had gold and silver spirals from top to bottom.

Sally's everything was maroon. Her wand was a cherry wood one with a silver handle. It had spirals on the handle.

'Hi' said Alicia.

'Hello' said Sally and Hilda.

They explained what happened to each other while being separated. Alicia and Sally's story was the same. They were surrounded by wands and they pick one and they had all the things like magic. But Hilda's story was different.

They went back to Zinya's cave and explained everything. They went home. And time went by. They managed to do schoolwork and make time for learning magic from Zinya. They didn't dare tell a word about it to their parents. Liora stayed advising Hilda. She was Hilda's older, wiser reflection. Hilda, Sally and Alicia needed a half a year of training until they go to Mythicloria. Evyana is still in prison. She doesn't have a wand anymore. But Hilda just knows that she will return somehow.

CHAPTER FIVE

Aurorans Exams

It was almost half a year after the incident when Hilda, Alicia and Sally were named official witches. They learnt a lot from Zinya. Zinya who was really a dragon had even more knowledge than any other witch or wizard. She had transformed back to a dragon now. She says that a dragon life is better than a human life which was really true. Kaya and Yuzu went back to Japan. They told Hilda to write them and tell the latest news. Zinya has told something about Aurorans exams earlier. It's the first exam they are taking. Zinya said the test will be held by the Department of Magical Education. She wrote a letter to Hilda, Sally and Alicia to come right away to clear the date and time for the exam. It was hard to concentrate because of the two worlds they live.

They went to the edge of Dassel stream and called Zinya. After a few moments Zinya appeared and carried them to her cave. In the cave, there was a man wearing a black robe.

'I'm Mr. Walz. I'm from the Department of Magical Education. You will face your exams after Christmas. The second of January, it will be a Saturday. Make sure you study hard' said Mr. Walz.

'Okay' said Hilda.

'I am going now' said Mr. Walz as he jumped on his broom and flew away.

'Aren't we getting brooms' asked Alicia.

'What on earth you'll need brooms for. If you really want. You can buy your own from Mythicloria' said Zinya.

'I don't hear the voices of the Aurora flames anymore' said Hilda.

'Maybe because Evyana is caught now' said Sally.

'Don't remind it. It may come again. Do you miss it?' asked Alicia.

'Yes. I miss fainting all over' said Hilda mockingly.

They said goodbye to Zinya and went home. They had more to do now. But Christmas was coming near too. That means they will have a holiday. Sally's birthday is the tenth of December. Sally was looking forward to it.

At last the day came.

'Happy birthday Sally' called Alicia and Hilda.

Sally's room was filled with gifts now. Sally's brother Andrew was getting jealous every time he sees Sally.

There were secret presents from Didi, Kaya and Yuzu too. They were carried by the wind secretly to Sally's room. Sally thought of going to the library again. She just had a feeling something might be there waiting for them. So, they all headed up to the library.

'Let's take a look at the book Magical History and Secrets book Hilda found last year' said Sally.

They looked very carefully. There were words and pictures in that book the touched a page where there was a picture of Evyana and the Aurora flames in it. They fell into the book. Or maybe it was a past memory. It was shown like a film.

It showed a picture of four kids playing together. And next they grew up and saw Evyana crying.

'You killed her' said Evyana.

'No, it was her fault. We just made her faults and crimes clear for her. 'She's quite old too. About eight hundred' said one of the Aurora flames.

'She's my mother. How am I supposed to live without her' said Evyana crying?

'Sorry Evy but rules are rules. You can come and live with us' said one of the aurora flames.

'*Koroshiteyaru*' shouted Evyana.

'No Evy!!! You can't' shouted one of the aurora flames.

Hilda, Sally and Alicia appeared in the normal world now. It was Evyana who killed the Aurora flames. She was also a best friend of the Aurora flames. How dare she betray her friends like that? She is so cruel.

'She is so cruel' said Hilda.

'Look there's a picture of the Aurora flames' said Alicia as they touched the picture. It was also a memory.

'Ariana Blaze, Helena Rave and Charisa Vale, you are official witches and the guardians of Mythicloria now. You can't tell anyone about your secrets. Your power and skills will be passed down for generations and generations. Your mission is to say "*Jibun no tsumi o omoidase*" to Elvira and she'll remember her crimes and she'll disappear from self-blame. Good luck' said a voice and Hilda, Sally and Alicia came back to normal life.

'Their names are Ariana, Helena and Charisa' said Alicia.

'So that's why everyone gets shocked when they hear our surnames' said Hilda.

'Indeed. I am sorry I didn't tell you sooner Hilda' said Liora.

‘That’s Ok’ said Hilda.

‘Is she still here? Liora’ asked Sally who couldn’t hear Liora.

‘Yes’ said Hilda.

They went home. Hilda went to her room happily. She was no longer alone. She had Liora by her side.

‘So, you were chosen too. But who were the other two?’ asked Hilda.

‘Alicia’s sister and Sally’s sister’ said Liora.

‘Sally has a sister?’ asked Hilda.

‘Oh, not her sister. Her cousin, Rosetta’ said Liora.

‘Was there a previous generation before yours?’ asked Hilda

‘Oh yes. Those were our mothers, grandmothers and great grandmothers and Ariana Blaze is our greatest grandmother’ said Liora.

‘Did you know Zinya before?’ asked Hilda.

‘Yes. But I couldn’t speak dragontongue so, I didn’t talk to her much’ said Liora.

‘Can I tell mum about you?’ asked Hilda.

‘No, don’t! they don’t like magic anymore. They don’t like it because it was the main reason for my death. And, by the way, you’ve got some homework. Right? Let’s do them quickly’ said Liora.

‘What if Evyana breaks from prison again?’ asked Hilda.

‘I think she’s in the high security cage. But she can break free. She doesn’t need a wand to perform magic. She might even enchant a spoon’ said Liora.

‘Can she make her own wands?’ asked Hilda.

‘Yes. Some people can. You just need to grab a stick or something like that and mutter *Erhebe meinen Zauberstab* ten times and it will form a wand. But it’s a restricted thing to do. You’ll need permission to do it’ said Liora.

Time went by. Days, weeks and months. January is getting closer and closer. Hilda, Sally and Alicia was studying hard. At last, the day has come.

‘*Dovahzu!* Hilda, you sit there and Sally there and Alicia over there’ said Zinya.

The paper has begun. It was so simple. It asked things like; How to get to Mythicloria? How to get past a mad dragon? How to make a wand?

Sally finished the test first; as always. She always finishes her test first in school too. Then Hilda and Alicia finished their tests too.

‘Ok. *Dovahzul*. Now get prepared for the practical test’ said Zinya.

‘What?’ said Hilda in a shock.

‘What do we have to do?’ asked Sally.

‘You have to go through an obstacle course with swamps, jungles and stuff. Come with me’ said Zinya.

She led them to an enormous forest. It was misty and dark inside. Quite creepy. There was a sign there. It was named “The Deadwood forest”

‘Um...Zinya? Are you sure this is the place?’ asked Alicia.

‘Yes. Don’t worry. Evyana won’t come’ said Zinya.

‘I have a bad feeling about this’ said Sally.

‘Me too’ Liora whispered to Hilda.

‘There’s one rule of the test. You three must stay together’ said Zinya.

They started from there and walked and walked. They saw a swamp with crocodiles. There wasn’t a bridge to cross.

‘*Friernen!*’ shouted Hilda and Alicia as the crocodiles froze solid.

‘*Hashi!*’ shouted Sally and a bridge appeared.

They had more challenges waiting. They passed through them all safely. They saw the exit. They ran towards it but it closed. A voice started to speak. Of course. It is Evyana. She escaped from prison again! Hilda could remember a spell. The spell that called the guards of Dumenza. What was it? She could remember it slightly.

‘*Dumenza keisatsu!*’ shouted Hilda.

‘Ha that spell doesn’t work for me now’ said Evyana.

‘HELP!!!’ shouted Alicia.

‘Zinya!!!’ shouted Sally.

‘Zinya, come and eat these girls while I search for the time turner’ said Evyana and she disappeared.

They got out of the Deadwood forest. They saw Zinya. She looked like she’s ready to attack someone. She made a nearby tree into crystals. Breath out water. Her eyes were completely black. She was like a monster. She was really a monster but not this cruel. Evyana must’ve done something to her.

‘I’m sorry Zinya but get ready to freeze’ said Sally.

'Friernen!' shouted Alicia but Zinya didn't froze. She stayed there looking even more dangerous than before.

'It's not working' said Sally.

'Ha...ha...ha... she is strong. She is stronger than any spell. Well, I can bring your big friend back if you tell me where the time turner is' said Evyana in a high voice.

'We don't know' said Hilda.

'Oh, really? Ok then. I'll ask a different one. I can bring her back if you give me your wands' said Evyana.

Alicia tried to give her wand to Evyana. She couldn't help it. She wants her friend Zinya back to the way she was.

'NO! Alicia, don't trust her' shouted Sally and Alicia stepped back from Evyana.

'Okay, if you silly girls don't want your friend back. It's ok. It's your choice. But promise me that you will bring me the time turner from where you're hiding it' said Evyana angrily.

'We told you. We don't have a time turner' said Hilda.

'Lying to the Queen of Darkness, are you? Well get prepared to run away' said Evyana as she whispered something to Zinya.

Evyana disappeared. Zinya looked angrier than ever. Everyone stepped back in case Zinya breath out water or crystals. After thinking for a while, Hilda stepped forward.

'No! Hilda, she'll eat you' shouted Alicia and Zinya gave a loud roar.

'Zinya' said Hilda as she missed a sharp crystal which was coming her way.

'Zinya, you know us. We are your friends' said Hilda.

'A huge crystal enough to flat her into the ground came over flying. Alicia and Sally pulled out their wands and saved Hilda's life in an inch.

'Zinya, please. This is not who you are. Don't let Evyana to control you' shouted Hilda.

Zinya stopped attacking them. She stood there for a moment. And then Zinya could hear Evyana's voice. Hilda heard it too.

'Don't listen to her. She doesn't understand. Tell her to give the time turner to me' demanded Evyana.

'Give the precious time turner to the Queen of Darkness' said Zinya in a dangerous voice.

'Zinya. Don't listen to her. Zinya fight her. Be yourself. It's me, HILDA. I'm your FRIEND' shouted Hilda.

The word "friend" echoed in Zinya's head. She shook her head very fast. She could hear Evyana's voice too.

‘Do you trust her?’ asked Evyana.

‘Don’t go near her Hilda. She looks mad’ shouted Alicia but Hilda took a step closer to Zinya.

‘Zinya’ said Hilda pointing her hand towards Zinya to pat her.

Zinya’s eyes were switching from blue to black. Zinya could see Hilda’s blue eyes looking at her. Zinya lowered her head to let Hilda pat it. Hilda came closer.

‘NO!!! Hilda’ said Sally.

‘Zinya, I know you wouldn’t hurt me’ said Hilda.

Hilda came closer. She patted Zinya and got even closer. She hugged Zinya very tightly. Zinya fought the dark magic and broke free. They could now hear Evyana screaming. Zinya soared up to the sky like a bullet and came back down. She fainted there at the spot.

‘Zinya? Are you Ok?’ asked Hilda.

‘You did it!’ said Zinya in a small voice.

‘*Dovahzul*’ said Hilda, so, now Alicia and Sally could hear Zinya too.

‘You passed the test. Now you can go to Mythicloria’ said Zinya.

‘So, Evyana was all part of the test?’ asked Sally.

‘No, she broke out of prison again. She made a curse that the Dumenza guards can’t come after her. She made a new wand for herself using a fork!’ said Zinya.

‘So, that’s why she asked our wands. She forced us to tell where the time turners are too. We don’t even know where it is’ said Alicia.

‘All answers are there in Mythicloria. And, by the way, Mr. Walz might be here any moment now. He was the one checking your papers, said Zinya.

After a few minutes, Mr. Walz came flying on his broom. He was holding a file. And he was not looking very happy. He landed and gave the papers to Hilda, Alicia and Sally. Sally scored the highest, as usual. Mr. Walz had something else in his file. It looks like a newspaper. Folded again and again.

‘Um... Mr. Walz? What’s that? Is it a newspaper?’ asked Sally.

‘Oh yes. This is the Mythical Times. It seems that Evyana has escaped in a very clever way. Here, there is a Dumenza guard’s memory from the moment Evyana escaped. Would you like to see it?’ said Mr. Walz giving the newspaper to Sally.

‘How is a memory in here?’ asked Hilda.

‘Every picture took by a magical camera seals a memory. Some drawings which are enchanted are like these too. It can bring you back in time when the scene really happened. You just have to touch the picture’ said Mr. Walz.

Hilda, Sally and Alicia touched it together and they went to the exact moment when Evyana escaped. Evyana didn’t have a wand. She was having her dinner. She used the charm to make her own wand.

‘Erhebe meinen Zauberstab’ she muttered ten times.

‘Ha... ha... ha... I will rise now’ said Evyana.

‘No, you won’t. Give me the wand. *Suitchi!*’ shouted the guard.

‘Bogyo suru’ shouted Evyana before the guard’s spell hit her.

‘Friernen!’ she shouted and the guard froze on the spot.

Hilda, Sally and Alicia came back. They were confused. If a guard can’t stop her, who can? If she finds the time turners and use them to bring Elvira back, they will be unstoppable. Only if they knew where the time turners were.

‘See you’ said Mr. Walz and he got on his broom and flew away.

‘Zinya, do you know where the time turners are?’ asked Hilda.

‘Um... I don’t know the exact place but one of them is here in Mythicloria’ said Zinya.

‘Can you give us the key now?’ asked Alicia.

‘Yes’ said Zinya grabbing her tail.

‘Is your tail the key?’ asked Sally.

‘No. there’s a place where the key is locked. And my tail is the key to the place that the key is locked’ said Zinya.

CHAPTER SIX

Mythicloria and the time turners

Zinya went to the edge of Dassel stream and dived underwater without hesitation. After a few minutes, she came up holding a Silver key. Hilda felt something in her head. It was the calling from the Aurora flames. This time, it was a bit painful for Hilda. First, she felt like having a headache. The voice seemed to be terrified.

‘Come... free us. *One* of the time turners are with us. Please... be quick... We are in the its underground. It’s right below the Galaxy hill... come...’ Hilda couldn’t hear where they were but she could remember they’re under Galaxy hill. Hilda fainted and collapsed to the ground.

‘Hilda! Hilda! Wake up... this isn’t the time for collapsing’ shouted Alicia.

‘What?’ hummed Hilda in a low voice.

‘Wake up!’ shouted Sally.

‘You’ve got to get going now’, said Zinya.

‘I know where they are’, said Hilda who was lying on the ground.

‘Know where who are?’, asked Alicia.

‘The Aurora flames! They got one of the time turners with them. They’re in somewhere; I couldn’t hear. That place they’re in is under Galaxy hill’ said Hilda who was still lying on the ground.

‘What?’ asked Alicia in a shock.

‘I heard the Aurora flames!’ yelled Hilda, trying to stand straight with the help of Sally.

‘Well, what are we waiting for? Let’s go!’ said Alicia.

‘Ok, good luck, said Zinya.

‘Aren’t you coming, Zinya’ asked Hilda.

‘No, I have to guard the key. Evyana might get into Mythicloria if I come with you’ said Zinya.

‘Okay then, said Alicia.

‘Where’s the entrance?’ asked Sally.

‘*Schiwimmen!* Follow me’ said Zinya, leading them to the bottom of the Dassel stream.

It was getting darker and darker. This wasn't the place Hilda came before. It looked like no living creature lived there. Sally gave a quiet sob.

'*Licht*' said Zinya, and her horns and wings began to glow.

'There!' said Hilda, pointing to a door.

'Ah yes' said Zinya, unlocking the door with the key

Hilda, Alicia and Sally went inside. Zinya locked the door. They were in a bottom of some kind of lake. Their swimming charm was wearing off.

'Oh, no! I can't breathe' said Sally.

'Let's go faster' said Alicia, grabbing Sally's hand.

'Need..... any... help.....?' asked a voice. It sounded like a song.

'Who're you?' said Hilda, pointing her wand at the distant voice.

'I am Aqua. I'm a mermaid. A good mermaid. I am hear to warn you about other mermaids. They sing songs and hypnotize people who come here. So, I warn you. Close your ears on your way to Mythicloria. They stopped many people from going to Mythicloria. Good luck!' said Aqua as she went away in a hurry.

'Sally, Alicia, close your ears' shouted Hilda, swimming upwards to Sally and Alicia.

'Why?' said Alicia, reaching the top of the lake.

'Mermaids' said Hilda.

'Cool. Where are they?' asked Alicia

'They are not cool. They hypno-' before Hilda could finish, a mermaid appeared in front of them and started to sing. Hilda and Sally closed their ears.

'Oh..... come.... to.....me.....do.... whatever.....I say..... obey.....me..... and..... get those two out of here....'sang the mermaid.

'No, Alicia' shouted Hilda.

Alicia came forward like a zombie. She looked very hypnotized. She tried to grab Hilda and Sally. Sally was nearly out of breath. Sally jumped out of the lake. Finally, she could breathe. Hilda was still underwater. Sally couldn't swim. She wasn't brave as Hilda or Alicia. What is she going to do? Sally jumped into the lake. Alicia was dragging Hilda away. The mermaid was out of sight. Sally saw the good mermaid coming. She didn't know she was good, so, she covered her ears just to be safe.

'Hello, I'm not talking for long. I got to hide. But the mermaid songs only work underwater' said Aqua, the good mermaid in a whisper and she went away.

Sally lost her breath again. She went up the lake to get some air again. If Alicia was trying to get Sally and Hilda away, she could still grab her or push her if Sally went. What if Alicia couldn't see her?

'Kieru' muttered Sally with her own wand, to herself.

Sally turned invisible. She dived down the lake once again and pulled Alicia and Hilda up to the shore.

'Sally? Is that you?' asked Hilda.

'Erscheinen' said Sally as she appeared again.

'Thank you Sally. And... did you swim without magic? That was incredible' said Hilda, hugging Sally.

'Aren't you scared of swimming?' asked Alicia.

'Yes. I was before' said Sally with a smile.

'Trocken' said Hilda as all their wet clothes and hair were dried.

'Yaey!' shouted Alicia.

'Do you remember why we're here? Let's go' said Hilda in a rush.

'But where exactly?' asked Sally.

'Can't you call the Aurora flames?' asked Alicia.

'I don't think I can' said Hilda.

'Where are they locked?' asked Sally.

'Somewhere beneath a place called Galaxy hill' said Hilda.

'Where and what is exactly Galaxy hill?' asked Alicia.

'I don't know' said Hilda sadly.

Alicia opened her mouth to say something and closed it again. She looked kind of mad. Sally saw the mad look on Alicia's face.

'If you-' Alicia stopped in mid-sentence because Sally said something.

'Look! There's a map' said Sally.

There was a map there. It wasn't a paper, it was a poster. They could see all the places in Mythiclora. And finally, they spotted Galaxy hill. It was on the other end of Mythiclora. It was getting dark too. They have to go home soon. Only if there were some way to go to galaxy hill faster.

'It's on the other side of Mythiclora. How are we going to get there? Don't tell me we are going to walk' said Alicia.

‘Hold on. We’ll figure out something to do. At the meantime, let’ just start our journey here’ said Hilda.

‘Okay then. One step... two steps..... one hundred and twenty-four steps’ Alicia counted steps until she saw something weird. ‘Look! What could that be?’ asked Alicia.

It was obviously a rock. A small rock; not that small. More like a pebble; or maybe not. It was the size of a tomato. Alicia just said that to get attention. Alicia can be funny sometimes but can be serious too. This time she was indeed trying to make the others laugh.

‘What do you call a rock on the road?’ asked Alicia.

‘What?’ asked Hilda, looking at the rock.

‘Rock and roll’ said Alicia, picking up the rock.

‘Wait, I saw something like this somewhere’ said Sally, pointing at the rock. Before anyone could react, she grabbed it and checked it slowly.

‘Look, there’s something under the dust’ said Hilda, wiping away the dust on the rock.

Under the dust was a symbol. It was a circle divided to two halves. There were two arrows in each direction. What could this mean. Was this a time turner?

‘I saw this exact symbol in the book History of Magic and Secrets’ said Hilda.

‘Maybe this is a time turner?’ said Sally.

‘I wish I could go back to the library again’ said Hilda, rubbing the symbol.

She disappeared. She went straight to the library. She somehow teleported! She was right in front of the book which had no words before Hilda and her friends were witches. Hilda flipped through the pages and found something about the symbol. It wasn’t a time turner. It was a teleporter. You can get from one place to another by rubbing the symbol and saying where you want to be.

‘Bring me back to the place Sally and Alicia are’ said Hilda, rubbing the stone.

She was back to the place Sally and Alicia were. They were discussing about whether Hilda time travelled or vanished. They were shocked to see Hilda back.

‘Where did you go?’ asked Sally.

‘Um... I actually teleported to the library. We don’t need to waste our time walking to Galaxy hill, we can go there by this’ said Hilda.

‘So, how do we get there?’ asked Alicia.

‘It’s easy, just rub this symbol and say where do you want to go’ said Hilda showing the symbol.

‘Okay, let’s do it then’ said Sally.

‘Galaxy hill’ they said as they teleported to Galaxy hill. It felt like a gust of wind going by.

‘So, you said the Aurora flames are under this hill?’ asked Alicia.

‘Yes. But how do we-’ Hilda said something but no one could hear because she heard something in her ear.

‘Come..... you are close..... use the teleporter..... come on.....’ said the voice which was closer than ever.

Hilda fainted and fell down as usual. She laid there for a long time. Sally and Alicia tried their best to wake her up. At last, Hilda heard someone calling her name.

‘HILDA!! HILDA!!!’ shouted Alicia and Sally.

‘I- I heard them. Let’s use the teleporter’ said Hilda in a low voice.

‘Of course,’ said Sally pulling Hilda up.

‘Bring us to the place where the Aurora flames are hidden’ said them all as they teleported to a dark place with several closed doors around it.

‘Um... hello? Is anyone here?’ asked Alicia.

But before they could say anything else, one of the doors opened and a ghost came towards them. It was smiling creepily at them.

‘Get lost people!’ shouted the ghost as all the closed doors opened.

There were ten doors. One was where the ghost came from. The ghost flowed all over the room and laughed.

‘Who do you want to see?’ asked the ghost.

‘The Aurora flames’ said Hilda.

‘Oh, really ha... ha... ha’ said the ghost and it disappeared.

‘That thing is rude, even for a ghost’ said Liora, who was standing near Hilda all along!

‘Liora? Are you still here?’ asked Hilda.

‘Yes. You are very close too’ said Liora.

‘Hilda, if there’s Liora here, can you ask her if she had ever been here’ said Alicia.

‘Liora, have you ever been here?’ asked Hilda.

‘Yes. I came here with Alicia’s sister Diana and Sally’s cousin Rosetta. We came for rescuing them too but unfortunately, we couldn’t save them. We don’t know they are trapped somewhere together’ said Liora.

‘So, we have to go and check every path?’ asked Hilda.

‘Yes’ said Liora.

‘Right, everyone split up. Each of us will go on two paths each, and if anyone find a path that actually go to where the Aurora flames are trapped, come here and shout I found it’ said Hilda in a rush.

‘Okay then’ said Alicia.

Hilda, Sally, Alicia and Liora went on four different paths first and none of them leads to the Aurora flames. The path Hilda went led to an enormous tree. The path Alicia took led to a monster. The path Sally took led to nothing. The path Liora took led to nothing too. They checked four more doors but there was no sign of the Aurora flames. There were two doors left. One of them was the door the ghost came from. They all took the path the ghost came in. there was no sign of anything there. Now, they had only one door to go. They went in. There were the Aurora flames, trapped in something that looks like a cage. They were transparent and were not ghosts, just like Liora. The difference was Alicia and Sally could see them.

‘Hello’ said Hilda.

‘You came at last. Just use your wands say “*free the good and trap the bad*” three times and you can free us. And you must trap Evyana here because if you save someone from here you must bring a bad person here again. That’s what the spell says’ said one of the Aurora flames who seemed to be Ariana blaze.

‘Wands out everyone’ said Alicia.

‘*Free the good and trap the bad...free the good and trap the bad...free the good and trap the bad*’ muttered Hilda, Sally and Alicia.

A bright light came over them and released the Aurora flames. The Aurora flames seemed to be young. They all looked similar to Hilda, Alicia and Sally.

‘I have so many questions to ask’ said Alicia.

‘Go on,’ said one of the Aurora flames.

‘Well, first of all, what are your names? And how did Evyana trapped you after you died? And are you ghosts? Do you have a time turner with you? Where are the other time turners? Did you make magic?’ asked Alicia in one breath.

‘I’m Ariana Blaze and this is Helena Rave and this is Charisa Vale’ said Ariana.

‘Evyana trapped us because we are not ghosts. We are the guardians of Mythiclora even though we died. And yes, we have one of the time turners right here, it’s my bracelet. We know the other time turners are in Japan and Germany but we don’t know exactly where. And no, we weren’t the ones who well, made magic’ said Helena.

‘So, what do we have to do with the bracelet?’ asked Sally.

‘Destroy it’ said Charisa.

‘WHAT???’ said Alicia and Hilda.

‘Yes. You have no choice. It’s a precious creation of the people who invented magic. But if it get’s to the wrong hands bad things can happen’ said Helena.

‘So, we break it?’ asked Hilda.

‘There’s a special way to destroy it’ said Helena.

‘Just say “*Destroyero*”’ said Ariana.

‘*Destroyero*’ said Hilda as the bracelet shattered into pieces.

‘What do we do about the other time turners?’ asked Sally.

‘Kaya and Yuzu are in Japan’ said Hilda.

‘It’s getting late. We’ll go there tomorrow’ said Alicia.

They went back home instantly with the teleporter. They could use the same way to get to Japan too. The next morning, they all went to Dragon’s nest and told Zinya about what they are going to do.

‘Bring us to where Kaya and Yuzu are in Japan’ said Hilda, Sally and Alicia as they rubbed the stone and teleported their way to Japan.

‘Konichiwa- I mean hello Hilda and friends who can’t hear me’ said Kaya with a Japanese accent.

‘Kaya do you know where one of the time turners are hidden? We need to destroy them before Evyana gets her hands on it’ said Hilda.

‘I... I can’t tell you. I’m so sorry....’ said Kaya.

‘Please....’ said Hilda.

‘Are you destroying them?’ asked Kaya.

‘Well, yes. The Aurora flames told us to’ said Hilda.

‘Okay then, here you go’ said Kaya as she pulled off the neckless she was wearing.

‘*Destroyero*’ said Hilda and the neckless shattered to little pieces. Kaya gave a quiet sob and eventually started to cry.

‘I was the protector of the time turner. What am I going to do now? I’m pretty much useless now’ said Kaya.

‘No. you are not useless. You still have to protect Japan and the whole world. Cheer up’ said Hilda as she hugged the massive red dragon.

Alicia and Sally were speechless. They didn’t know what was going on but they guessed that Kaya was upset because the time turner was destroyed. They joined the hug anyway.

‘Okay, that was easy’ said Alicia.

‘Now off to Germany’ said them all rubbing the stone.

‘Where are we supposed to go now?’ asked Sally.

‘Should we ask someone?’ asked Alicia.

‘Only if there were a dragon here too’ said Hilda.

‘Hey, I have this stupid question to ask. Why are we even doing this? Can’t the Order of Mystery or something do this?’ said Alicia.

‘The Order of Mystery. Of course. I just have to write a letter to her’ said Hilda.

‘To whom?’ asked Sally.

‘To Rozina Rizal. I told you about her when she saved me from being killed’ said Hilda.

Dear Rozina,

Do you know where the time turner is? We are in Germany. You might know we are in a hurry. Please if you even know someone who’s guarding the time turner, let me know.

Hilda.

‘The wind will know where to find her,’ said Hilda as she let go of the letter.

Unfortunately, when the letter was finding its way to Rozina, Evyana caught it! The letter forced her to let go but she refused.

‘Oh, if there is a letter, there has to be an answer’ said Evyana as she let go of the letter.

Rozina received the letter. She was suspicious about it. She thought someone else apart from her and Hilda, touched the letter. She decided to write to Hilda in a secret code. The witch’s code. Rozina wrote the secret message and let the wind find its way. But most unfortunately, Evyana found her hands on it once again. Luckily, she didn’t know the code. She let go of the letter and followed it. The wind had a great idea. It soared up, down left and right. Now Evyana couldn’t possibly catch it. Finally, the wind reached Hilda.

‘Thank you, dear wind,’ said Hilda as she opened the letter

‘Is this a code? We don’t know codes’ said Sally.

‘Neither do I’ said Liora from behind.

‘Hold on, I think I figured out this code’ said Alicia.

‘The English letters are separated into small parts. You see the circle with a small line in the left is an “a” I remember in the book. Let’s teleport back to the library’ said Alicia.

They teleported their way back to the library and found the book. It was indeed a very hard code. But Alicia’s guess was right. The whole alphabet was in the book.

‘You are very smart Alicia’ said Sally.

This was the real message in the letter.

Dear Hilda,

I suspected that your letter was touched by someone else. So, I decided to write you in this witch’s code. There is a man named Otto in a building which is north from you are. He knows where it is. I remember there is a dragon named Ulan and I think he is guarding it. Master Otto will say.

Rozina

They quickly went back to Germany but they didn’t know they made a huge mistake. They left the letter in the library and the worst thing was they left the book opened. Only witches could read it though. But they didn’t know that Evyana was there in the library when they figured out what’s on the letter.

‘Oh, I see. Otto, bring me to where Otto is there’ said Evyana. She had a teleporter too.

She appeared in the place Otto was there before Hilda, Sally and Alicia could. She fooled Otto to tell her where the time turner is but it didn’t work.

‘Hello Master Otto. Can you tell me where the time turner is?’ asked Evyana.

‘I can not tell. You are not a good person’ said Otto.

‘*Watashi ni shitagau*’ said Evyana. She started to control master Otto

‘Here is the map to get there’ said Otto.

‘Ha....ha.... ha.....ha’ Evyana laughed.

After a few minutes Hilda, Alicia and Sally came to see master Otto. They found him lying on the floor. So, they woke him up and told everything.

‘I’m so sorry kids. Evyana came here and took the map. She made me tell her’

‘Do you have a copy or something?’ asked Alicia.

‘No. And I don’t even remember the road to go there but I know Ulan will’ said Otto as a white dragon appeared in the sky.

‘Is Ulan guarding the time turner?’ asked Sally.

‘Yes. And I suppose one of you can speak dragon’ said Otto.

‘Yes’ said Hilda.

‘Good luck’ said Otto.

The window was open, so Hilda first jumped out of the window on to Ulan’s back. The others followed.

‘Ulan, do you know where the time turner is?’ asked Hilda.

‘Yes of course but I don’t know what it is’ said Ulan.

‘What do you mean?’ asked Hilda.

‘Well, the other two-time turners, you have seen them but have you ever thought hoe to notice them? You can’t notice them unless someone tell you. How could you think a bracelet and a neckless could be time turners?’ explained Ulan.

‘It was pretty obvious. In the bracelet, there was a symbol of the moon and you know the moon changes every day, and the neckless was in a shape of an hourglass. I think this will be easier’ said Hilda.

‘You don’t understand. Wait till you see for yourself’ said Ulan as he landed near a cave.

The cave was full of little stuff like cups, spoons, books and lots of things. Ulan was right. It was very hard to find out what it was.

‘Okay, no big deal. Let’s search from top to bottom, bottom to top, left to right and right to left’ said Alicia.

‘I don’t think we have that much freedom to search like that’ said Sally, who was looking terrified as she pointed towards a figure.

Evyana was there searching the cave for the time turner. If she gets the hold of it, many bad things can happen. She might try to attack them too.

‘Oh no, I’ll watch, you search’ said Alicia.

Sally and Hilda nodded and started to search. They searched a whole pile of things but couldn’t find it.

‘Hilda, this is not going to work. We need to think outside the box’ said Sally.

‘What’s your plan?’ asked Hilda.

‘We need to search things related to time’ Sally whispered to Hilda’s ear.

‘Hilda, if you have a watch, what’s the time?’ asked Alicia.

‘Eleven o’clock’ said Hilda. She thought about something the word “watch” kept echoing in her ear.

She saw two watches on the ground. She nodded at Sally to make a signal. Sally nodded too. But they were not the only ones who saw it. Hilda grabbed one of the watched and Evyana

tried to grab the other. But there were two more hands covering it. Sally and Alicia had jumped forward and grabbed it. Sally got the watch. One of the watches had to be a time turner. Evyana searched for her wand to get the watches back but her wand wasn't in her pocket. Alicia grabbed it. Without hesitation, she broke it apart and a strike of lightning came from it.

'Give me the time turner' said Evyana.

'Nope' said Hilda.

'I said Give it' said Evyana.

'What's the magic word?' asked Alicia.

'Suitchi!' said Evyana but her magic didn't work because she was wandless.

'Not that. the other one' said Sally.

Just at the moment, the teleporter fell down from Alicia's pocket.

'Oh, a teleporter I see' said Evyana, trying to grab it.

Alicia jumped forward and grabbed the stone. she threw it near Ulan and he accidentally stepped on it. It broke and another strike of lightning came. Hilda was still deciding which was the real time turner. But how to know it. If someone older and wiser were here. Of course. There was someone older and wiser. Liora.

'Liora, do you know-' but even before Hilda could ask, she started to say something.

“*Turn the time for greater goods*” repeat that as many times as fast as you can' said Liora.

'Turn the time for greater goods... Turn the time for greater goods... Turn the time for greater goods... Turn the time for greater goods.....' muttered Hilda.

Hilda felt something in her hand. There was a great light in front of her and everything except for one watch disappeared. She was surrounded by numbers. Years, months dated and times. She could see what happened a long time ago and what will happen in the future.

She saw her mother and father holding herself as a baby. But they were crying. Hilda touched it and she went back to that exact moment. It was her sister Liora's funeral.

'We are not going to let magic into our houses ever again' said Hilda's mother.

Hilda suddenly realized that she was supposed to be destroying it. But how does she get back to the time she was? She realized that Liora came with her.

'Liora? How to get back?' asked Hilda.

'*Modoru*' said Liora.

'*Modoru*' said Hilda as she returned.

Hilda had a great plan in mind. She could trick Evyana and trap her in the cage the Aurora flames were trapped. She came back and saw Sally and Alicia doing their best to control her. Hilda

dropped the fake time turner on the floor on purpose. As she thought, Evyana came here to grab it. Hilda bended down and grabbed it before she could.

‘Now!’ shouted Hilda.

Sally and Alicia guessed that they were going to trap Evyana now.

‘Free the good and trap the bad..... Free the good and trap the bad..... Free the good and trap the bad.....’ muttered Sally, Hilda and Alicia as they could hear Evyana screaming. She disappeared to the magical cage where she belongs.

‘So, what do we do about this then?’ asked Hilda, looking at the watch. Its glass was broken.

‘I think... it’s best we destroy it’. Time traveling can be dangerous’ said Sally.

‘On three... one... two... three... *Destroyero!*’ and there was a strike of lightning and the time turner was gone.

‘I’m sorry about the teleporter though’ said Alicia.

‘Ulan, will you give us a lift?’ asked Hilda.

‘My pleasure’ said Ulan as he lowered his back.

They traveled through the sky in the speed of light. Still, thinking what they had done. They couldn’t wait to tell their parents.

‘You did that?’ asked their parents.

‘Yes’ said Hilda, Sally and Alicia.

‘I’m so proud of you. And as long as Evyana is powerless, you are safe’ said Hilda’s mother.

Some problems are solved. But will they stay solved forever?

Mysteries in Aurora’s Hollow still awaits!

The end!

Or maybe not

Thanks for reading



Afterword

With the approval of the Ministry of Education, this research-based project has empowered thousands of student authors for over ten years. Educationists recognize it as a program that significantly enhances the quality of school education. In alignment with modern educational reforms, encouraging students to author a research work is a milestone in this journey. In this digital age of "Smart" technology, the modern school must demonstrate through research that books and technology should be used together. This is because the unique joy a child receives from a book cannot be replaced by anything else. To prevent children from drifting away from books—which remain our primary educational tool and storehouse of human knowledge—Mahamaya Girls' College has spearheaded the "Hemamala Upahara" project for many years. Its primary objectives are to foster academic discipline, promote values, and pay tribute to Princess Hemamala, who fulfilled a historic mission to empower women. We express our gratitude to the Principal, teachers, parents, alumni of Mahamaya Girls' College, representatives of other schools, the Diyawadana Nilame, and the staff of the Sri Dalada Maligawa (Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic) for their support. Seneviratne Mahalekam (Project Creator)

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