

journey to  
EOS

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# Chapter 1

“I don’t believe in fairies.”

The door slammed behind Penelope as she huffed into her bedroom leaving a trail of glitter in her wake. “I don’t believe in fairies.” She repeated the muffled words into her pillow after collapsing onto her bed. She sent her diary sailing across her bedroom, knocking a rainbow of pencils onto the floor.

Penelope had long dark hair that was normally pulled back neatly by brightly coloured bands or elegant bows but they had fallen out, causing her hair to collapse in a mess around her freckled face. She had the deepest, greenest eyes that sparkled

majestically when she read books but now they looked like glass as they pooled with tears.

Nu had known this day was coming for most of her life. She had been surprised it had taken this long. She sat in the corner of Penelope's room covered in glitter and waited for what she was sure would follow.

Penelope was not like other girls her age. By the time her friends had their eleventh birthdays they had already stopped playing with dolls and reading fantasy books. Now they were all giggling at boys. Penelope didn't see the attraction. Instead of following the crowd, Penelope had become an expert in faking an interest and hiding her true feelings away.

Penelope hadn't been thinking when she threw her diary into her schoolbag. Her teacher, Mr Butler, had asked the class to bring a book or something that they could work on at school, as they were completing exams and there would be lots of sitting around between tests. The sitting around mostly led to the giggle-girls chatting and talking their usual nonsense. Penelope was nodding and smiling when Alison Turner saw the pink bound book in Penelope's bag. Trust her to pull it out for everyone to see. Once upon a time they had been best friends. Penelope was pretty sure this wasn't

how best friends acted.

The diary wasn't full of her personal secrets. It was a collection of stories and drawings, mostly of fairies and unicorns. Some of the horses didn't even have horns on their heads but that didn't stop everyone from laughing. Penelope's book ended up torn with pages and pictures scattered across the classroom. To top it off, Alison called Penelope Fairy Princess and threw a pot of the teacher's glitter all over her head.

As Penelope gathered up her notes, sprinkles of glitter fell in clumps to the ground. She put her book back together as best she could. Nobody had noticed the beautiful shading and intricate drawings, which had taken her hours. They had just followed Alison's lead and mocked her. Echoes of 'Fairy Princess' rang through her head as she fought back tears.

Nu watched it all unfold with horror. She was glowing as bright as ever with her tiny fingers curled into fists. Nu had based her whole appearance and life in general on Penelope. Even though Nu's hair was shorter and refused to grow the same way as Penelope's, Nu had pulled her hair back as best she could into two wispy pigtails. Instead of falling neatly over her shoulders like Penelope's they

floated airily either side of her head. Nu was dressed in an intricate patchwork fabric that hung weightlessly around her body and shone as the light passed through it like a rainbow might.

Nu had followed Penelope home, desperately trying to think of a way to make her feel better, but Nu was powerless to do anything and this made it all the worse. Nu was shorter than a pencil and as light as wind but her spirit was strong and she loved Penelope more than anything. Nu watched Penelope anxiously. She hoped she would just fall asleep. She hoped against hope that Penelope would forget the words she had uttered earlier. As Nu hovered over her she could see that Penelope's face was red, her eyes puffy and her cheek smeared with squashed tears.

But she wasn't asleep. Through her pillow she whispered five muffled words with conviction, "I don't believe in fairies."