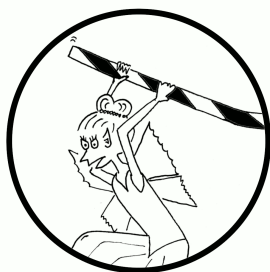


## CHAPTER ELEVEN



In the deserted school car park was a mountain of beautifully decorated Christmas trees. And standing next to it...was Elfie!

**“NOT INVITED TO THEIR STUPID TREE PARTY, EH?”** he muttered. **“WELL, WHEN I’M DONE, THERE’LL BE NO MORE PARTIES TO MISS!”**

We had managed to land without being seen. Now we were crouched behind a tall hedge spying on the crazy elf and trying to make a plan.

**"I HATE TREES,"** screamed Elfie, **"I HATE  
TREE PARTIES AND I HATE CHRISTMAS!"**

He wiggled his fingers and cackled wildly.

**"YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A BUNCH OF  
OLD TWIGS!"** he yelled, pointing at the pile of

trees, **"AND YOU'LL BURN LIKE A BUNCH  
OF OLD TWIGS!"**

In the moonlight, Elfie held a box to the sky  
and gave it a gleeful rattle.

**MATCHES!**

"Oh no!" groaned Blaze. "Where did he get  
those?"

*"What do we do?"* squeaked Hannah.

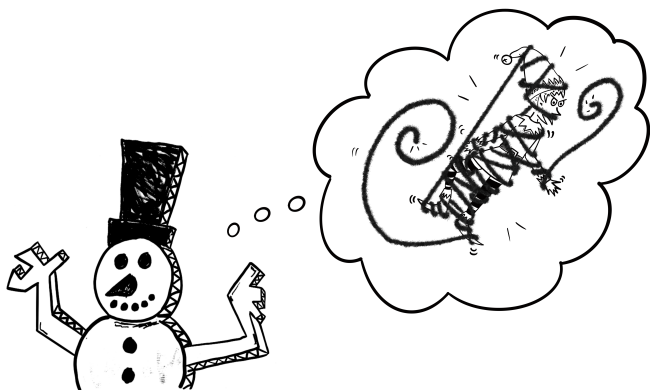
Elfie had started rummaging around in the  
trees.

**"MAYBE THERE'S A FLOATY FAIRY  
DRESS IN HERE SOMEWHERE,"** he muttered.

**"THAT WOULD GET A GOOD FIRE STARTED,"**

Sugar's skin turned red with fury.

**"Where's that nutcracker when you need it,"** she growled, but Tinselpants looked thoughtful.



**"Let's tie him up with Tinsel,"** he whispered. **"Tinsel is full of Christmas magic! It would be unbreakable!"**

**"Are you sure?"** asked Hannah.

**"Look, I know I haven't been a great guide..."** he began.

**"You've been a terrible guide,"** agreed

Sugar grinning.

**"well that's fair,"** he admitted. **"You see, the truth is, I don't know anything about the world..."**

**"You don't say!"** muttered Sugar.

**"I just really wanted to see it..."**

Tinselpants continued a little sadly, **"..just once."**

Hannah patted his shoulder, kindly.

**"Well now you have!"** she smiled.

**"Yes. I have!"** he agreed, looking brighter.

**"And I might not know much, but I do know about Christmas!"** he added firmly.

**"You can trust me about the tinsel."**

I looked at Hannah and she shrugged.

**"OK! Let's do it!"** I decided. **"Once Elfie is tied up we can work out what we do with the gift."**

**"But it's just a chunk of wood,"** wailed

Hannah.

Now it was Sugar's turn to pat her arm.

**"You stay here with Tinselpants and try to work it out,"** she suggested.  
**"We'll go get some tinsel."**

It wasn't a perfect plan but it was the best we could do.

So while Hannah and Tinselpants prodded at the plank, the rest of us darted around to the other side of the tree mountain and started to untangle the first strand of tinsel.

It was going quite well until...

**CLINK...Clink...clink...**

Somehow a single bauble had bounced to the ground.

**"WHO'S THERE?"** snapped the Elf.

And my stomach flipped as a familiar voice answered,

**"ME!"**

Peering past trees I saw **Hannah** stepping

out in to the car park. what was she doing?

**“YOU!”** snarled Elfie. **“COME TO STOP ME, HAVE YOU?”**

“Yes!” admitted Hannah looking calm and brave. “Yes, I thought I might try.”

Seriously, WHAT was she doing? This wasn't in the plan!

**“AND WHERE’S THE REST OF YOUR SILLY LITTLE GANG?”** sneered Elfie, glancing round.



I looked at Sugar and Blaze. We had only unraveled one string of tinsel but we were out of time. I jumped onto Blaze's back and Sugar nodded.

"We're right here!" I yelled and together we swooped out of our hiding place.

We dived towards him madly. Then round and round we went, tangling him as best we could with the single sparkling strand.

Elfie snarled and struggled to break free but for once Tinselpants had been right!

The tinsel was unbreakable!

**"WHAT IS THIS?!?!!"** screeched Elfie, as he realised he was stuck. **"SLEIGH! HELP ME!"**

The sleigh immediately shot out its magical force field, just as it had back in our garden. But this time Elfie was too far away.

**"NO GOOD, SLEIGH!"** cried the elf. **"TRY SOMETHING ELSE! QUICKLY!"**

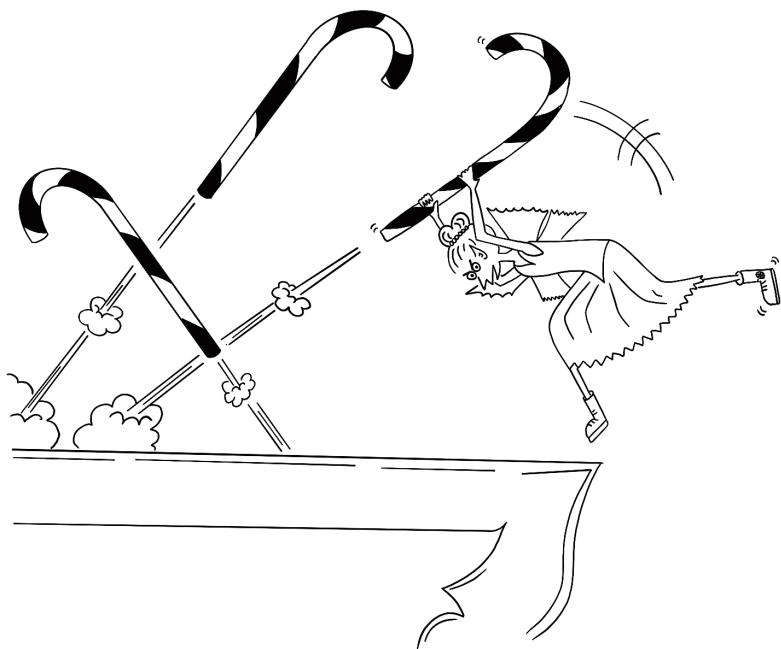
Instantly, the sleigh began shooting candy

canes like arrows in every direction!

**TWANG, THUNK, WHIZZ, THUNK!**

Blaze swung left and right trying to dodge, but Sugar had other ideas.

She swooped down, snatching up a candy cane arrow as she went and began to beat up the sleigh with it's own Christmassy weapon.





**“Stop it, you naughty sleigh! Stop  
- it - right - now!”**

Elfie was staggering around in the tinsel but somehow he'd managed to wriggle an arm free. He yanked a string of fairy lights from a nearby tree and with an evil laugh he threw the lights like a lasso... **straight at me and Blaze!**

Blaze tried to swerve but his wing got tangled and everyone knows **fairy lights are impossible to untangle!**

Down on the ground, Elfie was holding tight to the other end of the lights.

**We had just become the world's most Christmassy dragon kite!**

With a crazed laugh Elfie started to tug us towards him.

**“Let go of the lights!”** yelled Hannah.

**“We can't!”** I screamed. **“We're tangled!”**

Blaze flapped his wings furiously, but it was no use. Elfie was pulling us closer and closer!

**“The gift, Hannah,”** I screamed. **“Use the**

gift!"

Hannah looked down at the plank of wood in her hands.

"But I don't..." she began.

"Well, I DO!" yelled Tinselpants, rushing out from behind the hedge to stand by Hannah's side.

"Hey Elf!" he cried, "I'm putting you back on the shelf, where you belong!"

Elfie twitched.

"WHAT... WHAT SHELF?" he sneered, but he glanced around nervously. "YOU DON'T HAVE A SHELF!"

"Oh yes, I do!" yelled Tinselpants.

"meeeeeeeeeeeeeeeRRY CHRISTMAS!"

And with that Tinselpants snatched the plank from Hannah and bounced towards Elfie, leaping over Christmas trees like a snowman ninja.

Elfie's eyes grew wide. He turned to run but he was too late. Tinselpants swung the plank

through the air and hit him on the bum with a mighty



**“NO!”** he cried. **“NO! NO! NO!”**

With an explosion of magical dust the chunk of wood stuck fast to Elfie’s bottom. He clawed and yanked at it, but it was no use. It wouldn’t budge!

Because as you’ve probably guessed, it wasn’t just any old plank...

Santa had given Hannah... a magical shelf!

**“NO!”** screamed Elfie. **“NOOOOOOOOOO!”**

He was shrinking back to toy size now. He tried desperately to light a match but his hands

fumbled. They were turning back into mittens.



**“YOU BRATS!”** he screeched, staggering towards us, **“I’M GOING TO...”**

But before he could finish his face froze. His tiny body went limp and he flopped to the floor ... and lay still.

On the other side of the car park, the sleigh stopped fighting but Sugar didn’t seem to notice.

She just kept on whacking it.

Maybe she thought she was winning!

I slid down from Blaze's back as Hannah came to join us. It felt like the right moment for someone to say something wise.

"Erm...All's well that ends well," I suggested.

"Yep," agreed Hannah. "I guess so. Although we should probably go get Grandad's sleigh before Sugar smashes it to bits!"

## CHAPTER TWELVE



I cradled Grandad's sleigh decoration close to my chest. It looked fragile again, now it was back to the normal size.

Hard to believe it had been belting us with candy canes just a few moments ago.

**"We did it!"** sang Sugar who was now eating her candy cane.

"And we couldn't have done it without you, Tinselpants!" said Hannah.

**"Thanks,"** he blushed. **"Meeeeeerrry"**

## Christmas!"

"Now what do we do about all these trees," I wondered aloud. "We don't know where they came from but we can't just leave them here..."

"Imagine people waking up and finding their tree gone!" cried Hannah. "It's absolutely awful!"

**"Don't worry,"** smiled Sugar. **"It's fixable. We just need a little magical soooooooooong."**

Blaze pulled a face, but before he could complain Sugar started to sing.

**We've been through  
such a lot!  
Our elf-he totally  
lost the plot,  
yeah-eh-ah-eh  
yeeeeeeeeeeah!**



“Could you please get to the point, Sugar,” interrupted Blaze with a shiver. “The children are getting cold.”

Sugar scowled.

**“Fine,”** she muttered grumpily.

**“Christmas trees  
Full of light  
Turn to rockets  
Blazing bright!”**

She took a theatrical bow.

**“Short and sweet,”** she announced.

**“Just like me!”**

The pile of trees began to rustle.

**“10, 9, 8, 7...”** sang Sugar.

The rustle became a wobble and on the trees ornaments began to clink and clank together.

**“6, 5, 4, 3,”** shouted Sugar.

Suddenly, the bottom of each



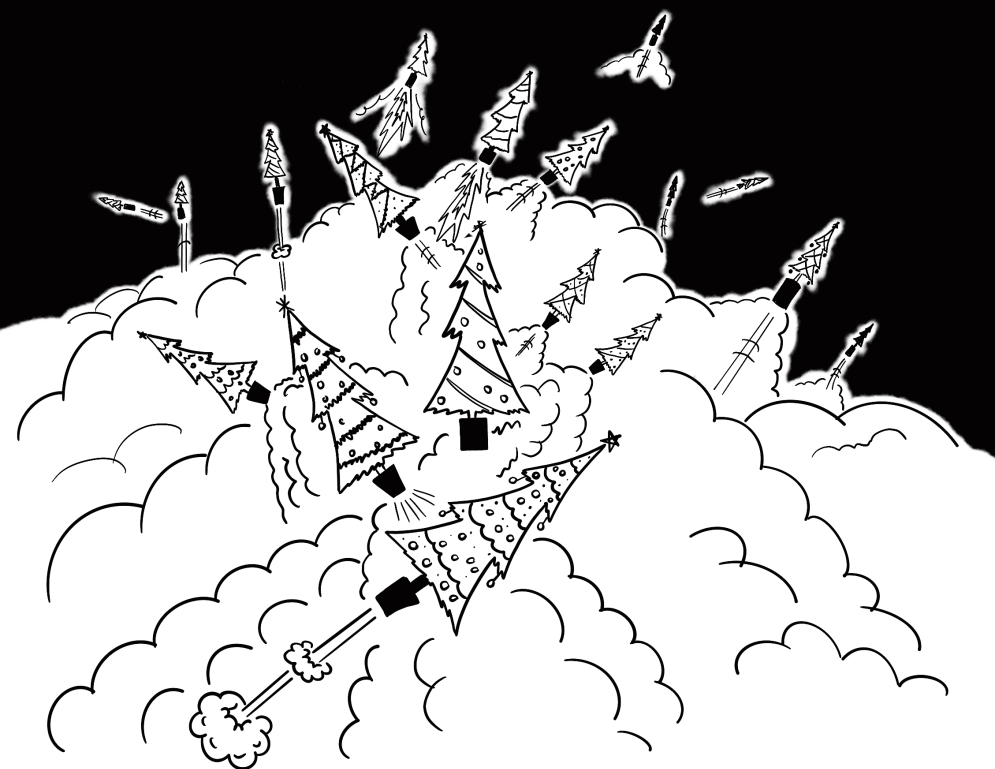
Christmas tree burst into flames with a

## ROAR OF NOISE!

"Sugar, what have you done?!" screamed Hannah but Sugar just kept counting down.

**"2,1, BLAST OFF!"** she screamed.

With a **MASSIVE EXPLOSION** the first Christmas tree shot into the sky like a bristly green rocket. The rest of the trees followed, exploding fire and zooming back to their homes.



In no time at all, not a single bauble was left. The school car park was completely empty.

*"Amazing!"* smiled Hannah, watching the last tree whiz out of sight.

"Yes, yes. Very impressive," grumbled Blaze. "But now it's time for bed!"

He crouched down so we could climb onto his back. But just then, there was a snort as a golden triceratops plodded out of a nearby bush.

*"Glitzen!"* cried Hannah. *"You're safe!"*

The dinosaur looked blankly at her for a second then returned to munching the frosty grass.

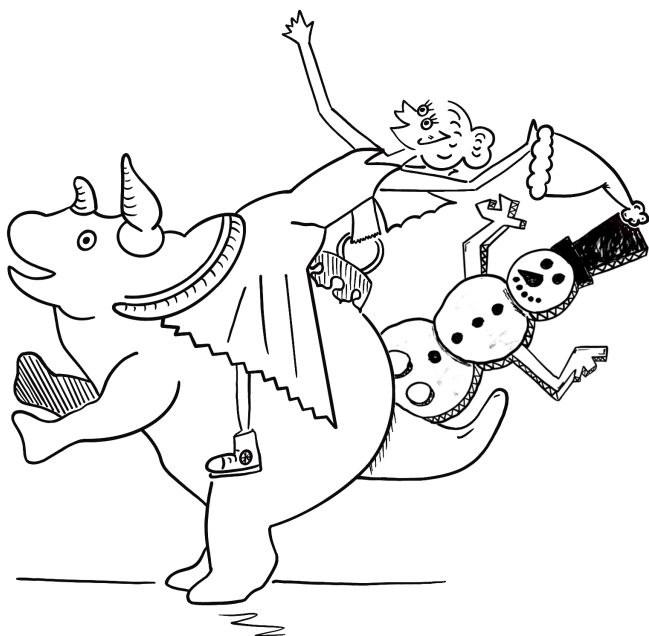
Sugar flew to Glitzen's side and gave him a friendly stroke, her face full of mischief.

**"How about a little race?"** she called to Blaze wiggling her eyebrows.

"It's far too late for silliness like that," said Blaze crossly.

**"I'm with the fairy!"** cried Tinselpants and giggling the two of them climbed onto

Glitzen's back.



**"Last one home's a big bummed bauble!"** sang Sugar.

"Now, seriously..." tried Blaze but as always, Sugar wasn't listening.

**"Giddyup!"** she cried and Glitzen shot into the sky, leaving a trail of shimmering gold.

"Catch them, Blaze!" screamed Hannah.

