

Inspired by Tinker Bell from the book
Peter Pan by J. M. Barrie

The Fairy Bell Sisters

Hearts and
Flowers
for Clara



Margaret McNamara

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**The Fairy Bell Sisters:
Hearts and Flowers for Clara**

«HarperCollins»

McNamara M.

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Do you believe in fairies? Join Tinker Bell's sisters on a magical valentine's adventure. Inspired by Tinker Bell, from the book Peter Pan, by J. M. Barrie Before Tinker Bell flew to Never Land and met Peter Pan she lived on Sheeps Kerry Island with her fairy sisters – Clara, Lily, Rosie, Silver and Squeak the baby. Every fairy loves the Valentines Games on Sheeps Kerry Island. There's races, feasts and friendly visitors to compete with. Clara wants it all to be perfect so she uses a little more magic than usual. But newfound magic can be risky, and Clara's kindness puts her in terrible danger... Young readers will love the enchanting stories and beautiful illustrations in this charming series.

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Magic Gifts

Some fairies on Sheepskerry Island have a special gift for magic.

Like her sister Tinker Bell, Clara is one of those fairies.

So when Sheepskerry hosts the Valentine's Games, Clara can't help putting her magic to good use. But fairy magic is a powerful thing ...



The Fairy Bell Sisters



Hearts and Flowers
for Clara

Margaret McNamara

Illustrations by Erica-Jane Waters



HarperCollins *Children's Books*

For Donna Bell Bray



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Chapter One

Valentine's Day for fairies is a lovely affair, for fairies like to send and receive valentines more than anything else. (Anything else in February, that is.) And Valentine's Week on Sheeps Kerry Island is better than anywhere else, because Queen Mab enchants Lady's Slipper Field and turns the dark of winter into the fresh breath of summer. All the Sheeps Kerry fairies gather in the meadow to exchange gifts and cards. They smell the orange blossoms and the roses. They throw off their heavy coats and scarves and mittens and wear their light summer dresses. They kick off their shoes and turn their faces to the warm sun.



Also, gnomes come.

Gnomes?

You didn't think there were only *trolls* in the world of the fairies, did you? (Trolls hibernate through the winter, by the way.) Gnomes are terribly different from trolls. Gnomes don't have warts, for one thing. They're not smelly. And they can talk properly, though they have a bit of a lilt to their speech as a result of living on the faraway Outer Islands. I know you may have seen garden gnomes with long beards and fishing poles, still as statues at the bottom of a garden. That's what gnomes look like when they get old and grumpy. But when they're young ...

"When they're young, gnomes are lots of fun," said Clara Bell as she knotted a warm purple scarf round her neck. It was a very cold February day and all the Sheeps Kerry fairies were bundled up tightly, especially Tinker Bell's little sisters.

Chapter Two

I'm fairly certain you've met Tinker Bell's little sisters, but if you have not, let's please introduce them now. Here are:



The five Bell sisters – and their friend Poppy Flower – were making their way back from fairy school, which had let out early today, as the snow was falling fast and thick. They darted between snowflakes as they flew.

“Gnomes *are* lots of fun,” said Lily, “even if too many of them wear those awful pointy hats.”

“I like their hats!” said Rosie.

“*Tutu!*” said Squeak.

“Me three!” said Silver. “And I don’t mind what they wear as long as they’re not too good at sports. Because I want to beat them all at the Valentine’s Games.”

That’s another thing the fairies love about February: the Valentine’s Games. I won’t tell you about them now, as Rosie will tell us about them in a moment or two, if you can be patient.

“The only way you’d beat *all* the gnomes in your very first year of competition,” said Lily, “is if you used magic, which unfortunately we don’t have much of yet.”

“Not true!” said Silver. “I’ve been training! Besides, I’ll have lots of magic soon.”

“Not too soon, I hope,” said Rosie. “We still have some growing up to do before we get our magical powers.” Rosie gave Silver a hug on the wing.



“But I’m sure when you do you’ll be as magical as Tink herself.”

That made Silver smile. And though none of her sisters saw it, Rosie’s words made Clara smile too. She had been practising her fairy charms since her last birthday and she could already make a bell ring without touching it. (She was a Bell sister, after all!) Just last week, she’d taught herself how to make a rose bloom in the snow. Right now, she was working on her sparkle charm. That was a tricky one.

As Clara flew towards home, she thought about something that had happened long ago, when she was a very young fairy. She had noticed a tiny grasshopper in the tall grass near Lupine Pond. Its

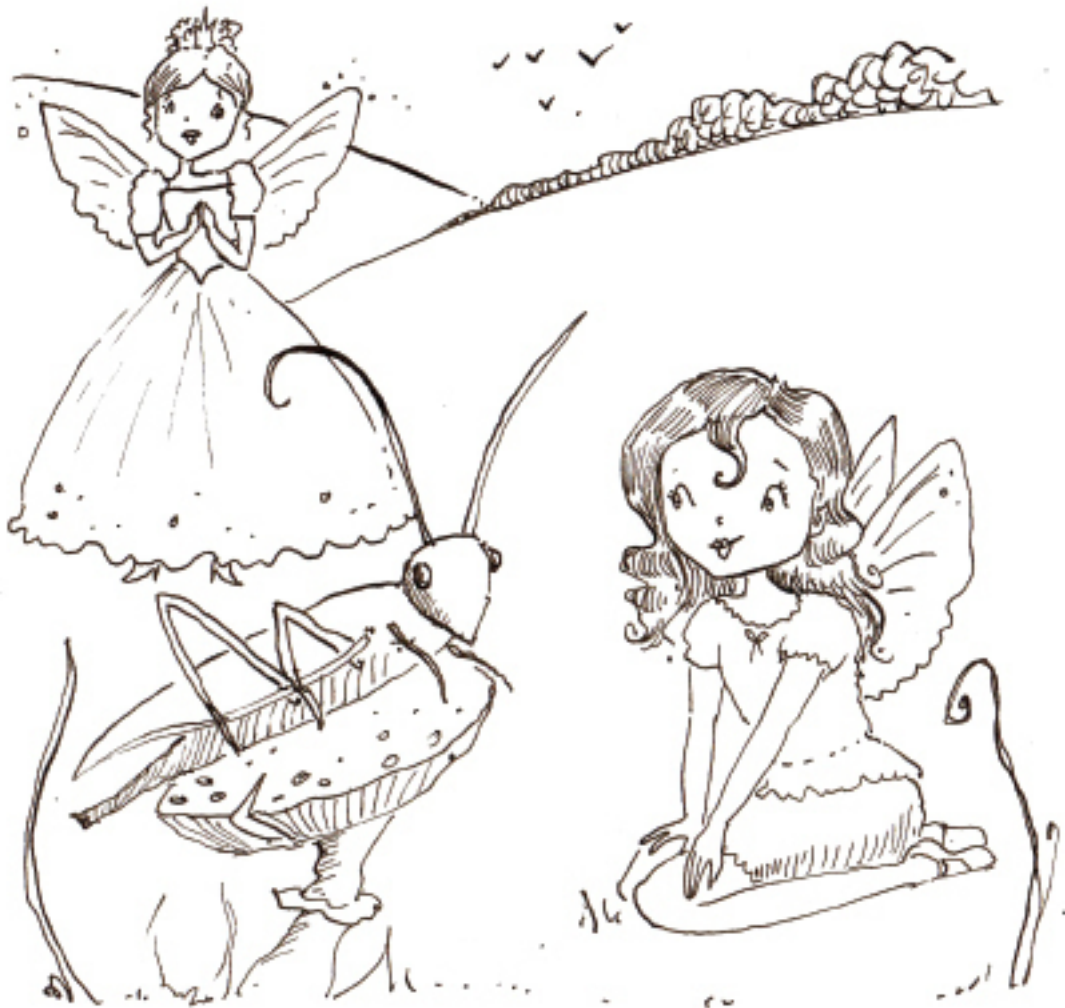
leg was broken, so it could not hop or even sing a grasshopper song to call for help. (Grasshoppers use their legs to make their songs!) Clara had known she didn't have a hope of helping the grasshopper – she hadn't even started learning charms yet at school. But she couldn't bear to see the injured insect. Then all at once, she recalled a charm she'd heard her big sister, Tinker Bell, recite once, long ago. How did it go?

Clear as crystal, Clara heard Tink's voice in her head. She closed her eyes, stretched out her arms, and said:

*Harm and hurt
And pain no more.
Feel this power,
From my core.
May you be
Sound as a bell.
May my magic
Make you well!*

Clara had felt faint and dizzy, and it took a few moments before she was well enough to open her eyes again. She steadied herself and looked at the grasshopper. It hadn't hopped away. It was exactly where she had first seen it. Her charm had failed!

But the very next moment she heard a tiny little *chirrp* coming from her grasshopper friend. That could only mean ...



“Your leg has healed!” she’d cried.

Then she’d heard a voice behind her. “Clara. Clara Bell.”

It was Queen Mab! Clara had nearly jumped out of her wings.

“Were you using magic?”

Clara almost had not dared to speak to the queen. But Queen Mab had asked her a question, and she could not let it go unanswered. “I was, Your Majesty,” she’d said.

“The healing charm is very powerful, Clara Bell. Did you learn it from Tinker Bell?”

“I did, Queen Mab.”

“Tink should know better than to teach that to you. It takes life to heal life.”

Clara wasn’t exactly sure what Queen Mab had meant when she said that. But she had curtsied deeply. “Forgive me, my queen,” she’d said.

“Do not be ashamed, Clara Bell. You are a young fairy right now, but you have a gift for magic. You will be a very great fairy one day.”

Clara could hardly believe her ears. “I will?” she’d asked in a whisper.

“Yes, Clara Bell, you will,” said Queen Mab.

Clara had never forgotten that encounter with the queen. (Would you?) In fact, Queen Mab’s words had given Clara great confidence her whole life.


However, I’d better warn you: if you’re looking for a story where a very confident fairy sails along making clever decisions, always being careful, and never taking on more than she can manage, then this book will not be your cup of fairy tea. But if you’d like to hear about a fairy who’s admired by all and expects so much of herself that she takes on far too much – so much that she almost risks her life – then you’ll want to turn the page.

I’m keeping my fingers crossed you’ll turn the page ...

Chapter Three

Phew! I can uncross my fingers!





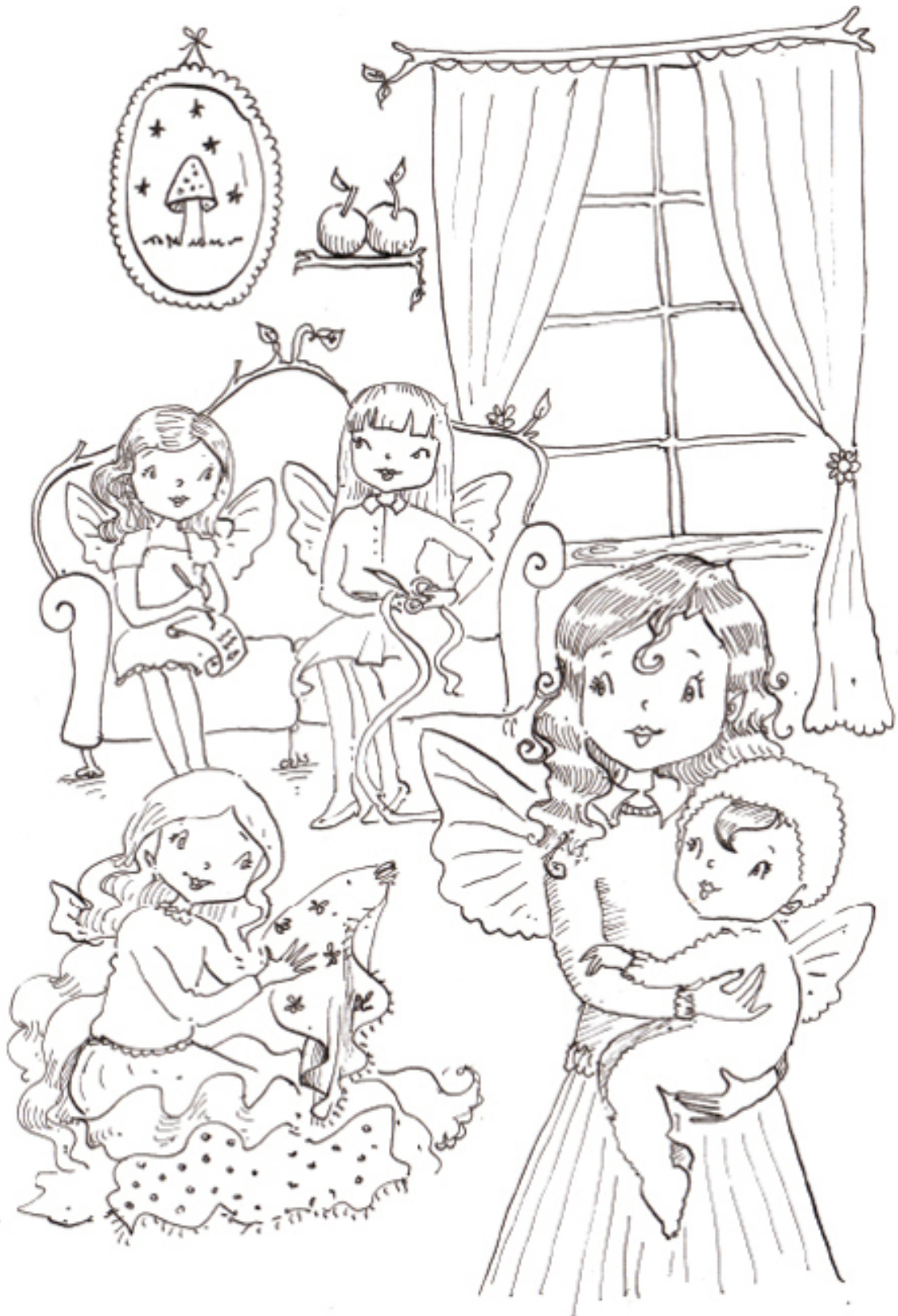
Chapter Four

Clara tucked the memory of Queen Mab's words into a pocket of her mind and flew in through the doorway of the Bell sisters' fairy house. She was thinking about her growing magic as the sisters sat around the fire together that evening.

"Rosie, I think you'd better finish your homework and stop writing that letter to Lulu," said Clara. "You're falling behind in Troll Tracks again."

"I just want to tell her about the Valentine's Games," said Rosie. Lulu was Rosie's friend – a real human child who believed in fairies (like someone else you might know). "I've written to her about the sack races and the long jump and the three-legged race and the tossing of the branches." She looked over her letter. It was already four pages long. "Now I need to tell her about the swim round the island. I hope the dolphins join in again."

"There's a baby dolphin this year," said Silver, who was trimming some lace. "Have you seen her? She's getting so fast! Poppy and I have named her Speedy."



“That’s a cute name,” said Lily.

“I know! Poppy wanted to name her Bluey but I told her my name was better.”

“Bluey’s nice too,” said Rosie. “But whatever she’s called, that little dolphin is the sweetest thing ever.”

“*Coomada!*” said Squeak.

“Yes, we all love babies, don’t we, Squeakie?” said Clara. She gave Squeak a big hug and looked over at Lily, who was deep in a pile of silk scarves. “How are Fairy Fractions going?”

“*Humph*,” said Lily.

“I love Fairy Fractions,” said Silver. “Three-fifths of a starfish plus two-fifths of a starfish equals one whole starfish!”

“Very good,” said Clara. “Lily, since you’re not doing your homework, can you please get Squeakie into her pyjamas?”

“Not right now,” said Lily. “I’m choosing a scarf to wear to the Games tomorrow.” She picked one out from the pile. “This looks good with my sky-blue eyes, don’t you think?” she asked the mirror, which did not reply. (Mirrors on Sheeps Kerry are not enchanted.)



Clara glanced at her sister and caught sight of her own reflection.

“You look nice tonight, Clara,” said Silver. “Did you polish your wings?”

Clara had not polished her wings. She had not changed a thing about herself. And yet her long, dark hair was shinier than ever. Her skin almost glowed. And her eyes, always a deep brown, seemed to be flecked with gold.

Perhaps her newfound magic was giving her a glow from inside.



Chapter Five

“Oh my word! The meadow is *gorgeous!*”

“Queen Mab has done her *best* magic ever!”

The Fairy Bell sisters shook the snow from their wings and flew into Lady’s Slipper Field. All the fairies were gathering there. This year the enchanted meadow was more lush and fragrant and flower-filled than ever before.

“I think the gnomes must have done some of this magical gardening,” said Iris Flower. “It is their speciality.”

“Off with this horrid winter hat!” Lily cried as she ran through the tall flowers. “Ooh! Avery!” she called to her best friend. “Can you feel that island sun?”

“Of course I can. It’s a picture-perfect day!” said Avery.

“I must look picture perfect for when the gnomes arrive,” said Lily. “How do you like my skirt?”

“It’s pretty, Lily, but I don’t think it will help you win any races,” said Silver. “Heigh-ho, Poppy!” she called. “Let’s do some flying practice. There’s no snow to weigh our wings down here.”



“I’ll take Squeak out of her fairy buggy,” said Rosie. “She’ll love being barefoot again. We’ll go for a romp, won’t we, Squeakie?” Rosie looked over at her older sister. “Do you have time for a quick walk, Clara?” she asked.

“No,” said Clara. “I have too much work to do. I promised Queen Mab I’d organise the welcoming banquet and decorate the banqueting hall.”

“You always take on so much,” called Lily. “Queen Mab’s lucky to have you.”

“We’re all lucky to have Clara,” said Rosie.

What Rosie didn’t know was that Clara actually wanted to be by herself. It was the perfect time to practise her sparkle charm. Most of the island would be deserted, as everybody would be in the meadow for the opening ceremony – which meant there would be not a soul on Sunrise Hill.

Clara darted out of the summery meadow and away up the hill. She hoped no one would notice where she was going.

It was cold and snowy up on the hill, but she knew the chilly wind wouldn’t trouble her if she could get some magic going. She had studied her Fairy Charms book last night, after all her sisters had fallen asleep. If she did this charm just right, the top of Sunrise Hill would be transformed.

Clara had memorised the words of the charm – that wasn't the hard part. It was doing the arm movements properly and spinning at the correct speed so that she always ended up in the same spot. She closed her eyes and gave it a try:

*Turn thrice around,
Fling wide your arm.
Sparkle now!
Obey my charm!*



She opened her eyes – and started coughing. The pretty white snow of Sunrise Hill was covered in soot! “Where did all – *ack* – this come from? *Ack! Ack!*” Even the squirrels were covering their faces with their scrawny winter tails. “I must have done the spell all wrong!” Clara’s eyes were streaming and her nose was running. “I’m so sorry, little squirrel,” she said. “I’d better clear this soot before Queen Mab thinks there’s been a fire on Sunrise Hill. Sparkles will drive the smoke away – but can I do it?”

Clara stood perfectly still and calmed her cough. She thought of what Queen Mab had said to her: *You will be a very great fairy one day.*

Clara filled her mind with the idea of her magical power. And she recited the charm again:
*Turn thrice around,
Fling wide your arm.*

Sparkle now!

Obey my charm!

Tentatively, Clara opened her eyes. The black soot was gone. In its place was a shimmering curtain of golden sparkles. The sparkles floated down to the ground and dusted the pure white snow, making it shine more brightly than Clara had ever seen. They landed on tree branches and turned the dark bark into patterns of shimmering gold. They turned the sweet little squirrel's coat golden, from whiskers to tail. The sparkles made Sunrise Hill, always a beautiful place, look absolutely breathtaking.

“I can't believe it!” cried Clara. “Oh, how beautiful! I did it! My first sparkle charm!”

A distant cheer went up from the meadow, and Clara remembered – the Welcoming Banquet. She hadn't done a thing to get ready!

Chapter Six

Clara flew from Sunrise Hill back to Queen Mab's palace. Everyone would be arriving there soon for a hearty dinner. She'd better get going – fast.



“Hey, Clara!” It was Julia Jellicoe. “You’re going the wrong way!” Julia flew right into Clara’s path. “The opening ceremony is almost over. Come on!”

“I’m not going, Julia,” said Clara. “I have too much work to do.” Clara hoped she didn’t sound too prim. She couldn’t exactly tell Julia that she’d been practising her magic. Not when she hadn’t mentioned it to her sisters – or to Queen Mab. “I’ve got to set up the Welcoming Banquet.”

“Oh, thank goodness *somebody’s* going to organise it,” said Julia. “There are plates and dishes all over the place. Ours is a surprise.”

“Julia!” said Clara. “What kind of surprise?”

“The gnomes will love it. See you later!”

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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