

Magic Ballerina

Christmas in Enchantia



Delphie's
ADVENTURES

Darcey Bussell

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Christmas in Enchantia

«HarperCollins»

Bussell D.

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Prima Ballerina Darcey Bussell takes you on a captivating journey to a faraway land of ballet and magic, in this special HB, perfect for a Christmas gift! It's Christmas, the most magical time of the year, and Delphie is really excited about taking part in her ballet school's special Christmas show! And just when Delphie thinks things can't get any better she is whisked away to Enchantia. Her friends there really need her help to make sure that this Christmas in Enchantia is the best one ever, despite King Rat's mischief making...

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Magic Ballerina

Christmas in Enchantia



Darcey Bussell

Magic BallerinaTM Christmas in Enchantia



Darcey Bussell

HarperCollinsChildren'sBooks

To Phoebe and Zoe, as they are the inspiration behind Magic Ballerina.



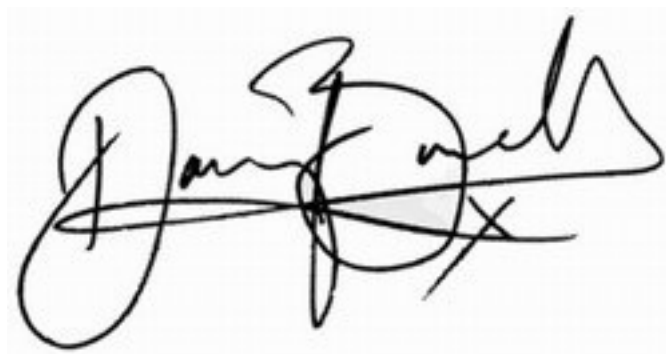
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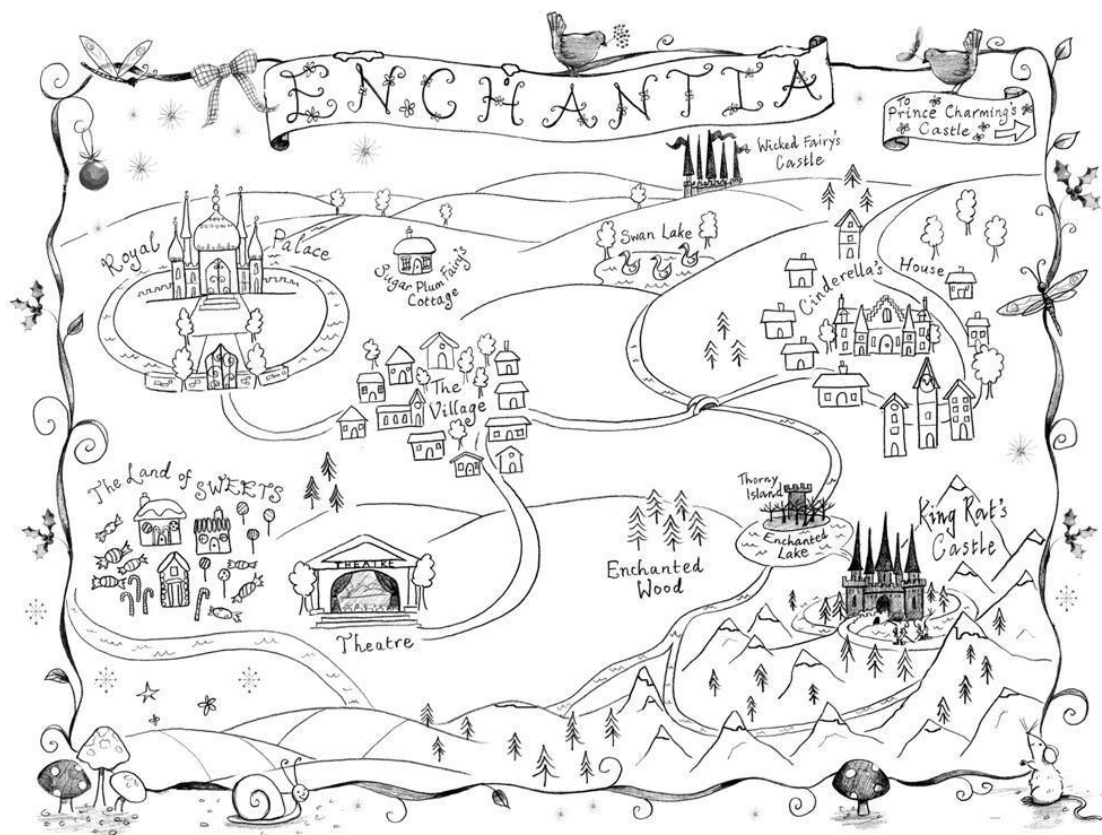


Welcome to the world of Enchantia!

I have always loved to dance. The captivating music and wonderful stories of ballet are so inspiring. So come with me and let's follow Delphie on her magical adventures in Enchantia, where the stories of dance will take you on a very special journey.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Bussell". The signature is stylized with large loops and a horizontal line crossing through the middle. The background is a light gray grid.

Map



Prologue

In the soft, pale light, the girl stood with her head bent and her hands held lightly in front of her. There was a moment's silence and then the first notes of the music began. For as long as the girl could remember music had seemed to tell her of another world – a magical, exciting world – that lay far, far away. She always felt if she could just close her eyes and lose herself, then she would get there. Maybe this time. As the music swirled inside her, she swept her arms above her head, rose on to her toes and began to dance ...



Christmas Eve



Delphie Durand stood by the window, pointing first one foot forward and then the other. The clouds in the sky were grey and heavy as she looked out. People were hurrying along the street, their faces buried in their scarves, their gloved hands full of shopping bags.

Oh I hope it snows tonight, Delphie thought longingly. She was nine and she hadn't once had a Christmas Day with snow.

"Delphie, do you want a mince pie?" her mum called from the kitchen.

Delphie ran through, leaping into the air on the way, to where her mum was washing up. A freshly baked batch of mince pies was cooling on a wire rack nearby.

"Well, would you like one?" her mum asked, nodding at them.

But Delphie's stomach felt full of fluttering butterflies. "Not now, thanks, Mum." Holding on to the back of a kitchen chair, she bent her knees, pulled her toe up against her leg and pointed it out to the side, her arm following gracefully. She just couldn't seem to stand still that afternoon. She was too excited.



Not only was it Christmas Eve but that night, Delphie's ballet school was doing a show at the town hall. Each class was going to be performing a dance they had been learning. Delphie's group was going to be doing one from a ballet called *The Nutcracker*. They had been practising for weeks.

Mrs Durand checked her watch. "We should get going. We don't want to be late."

"I'll get my things," said Delphie eagerly.

She went up to her room and brushed her long dark hair. The nutcracker toy that she was going to be using in the dance was on her dressing table next to her red ballet shoes. Delphie picked him up and danced a few steps around the room, pretending to be Clara, the girl in the ballet who was given the nutcracker for Christmas.

Delphie smiled as she remembered another time when she had done the dance – and done it for real! For Delphie had an amazing secret – her red ballet shoes were magic! Sometimes they would start to glow and sparkle and then they would whisk Delphie off to a magical land called Enchantia where all the characters from the different ballets lived. That was where Delphie had met the *real* Nutcracker and danced with him.

I wonder when I'll go to Enchantia again, she thought.

“Delphie! Time to go!” her mum called.

“Coming!” Delphie grabbed her shoes, ballet bag and the nutcracker toy and hurried out of the room.

It was exciting to get to the town hall and get changed in a proper dressing room with everyone else from her class. The mirror in front of her even had lights all round it. Delphie had a space between her two best friends, Poppy and Lola.

Sukie Taylor, who didn’t like Delphie much, was sitting on the other side of the room. “You’re the last to get here,” she said as Delphie sat down.

But Delphie ignored her. She wasn’t going to let Sukie spoil her evening and although she may well have been the last to arrive, she knew she wasn’t late.

“Hi, Delphie!” Poppy called over. She and Lola were fixing pink, blue and green ribbons in each other’s hair. Delphie felt a flicker of longing. Her mum had only managed to get her plain white ones. She’d seen her friends’ ribbons at the dress rehearsal and wished she’d had some the same, particularly when Sukie had laughed at her for being the only one with boring white ones. Sukie’s own ribbons were big, wide and gold. Delphie thought they looked a bit silly.

“We’ve got a present for you!” Lola jumped up and handed her a small package wrapped in Christmas paper. “Here!” she smiled. “It’s from both of us.”

“Oh, thanks.” Delphie felt awkward. She hadn’t realised they were getting each other Christmas presents and hadn’t brought anything for her friends.

“Well, open it then!” Poppy urged.

Delphie unwrapped the paper. “Ribbons!

Just like yours!” she exclaimed as she pulled a set of green, pink and blue ribbons out of the paper.



“Now we can all be the same!” said Lola.

Just then their teacher, Madame Za-Za, poked her head into the dressing room. "Hurry up, girls."

Delphie started to get changed. They all had to wear white leotards and knee-length white nightdresses. Over the tannoy system, Delphie could hear the sound of the audience coming into the town hall, talking and taking their seats. The orchestra was tuning up. A violin was playing a string of notes. Another musician blew a few deep notes on a tuba.

Poppy and Lola helped Delphie do her hair and then they started to warm up. Delphie bent and straightened her knees and thought about the dance ahead. It had been interesting watching the others at the dress rehearsal and seeing what they were good at. After the rehearsal, when she was practising at home, she had tried to skip as lightly as Poppy and to spin without wobbling like Lola and to lift her leg as high as Sukie, but the only problem was, the more she tried to be as good as the others at the different bits, the more her dancing just didn't feel right. *I hope it's going to be OK when I get on stage*, she thought nervously.

The tannoy crackled and there was an announcement. "Beginners to stage please. Beginners to stage."

Delphie's stomach clenched with excitement. "Good luck!" she said to Lola and Poppy and they all hugged. Even Sukie was looking anxious and as they got into line ready to go up to the stage, she caught Delphie's eye and gave her a nervous smile.

Delphie smiled back. "Good luck."

"Thanks," Sukie said, her nervousness making her nice for once. "You too, Delphie."

As they all hurried up the stairs on to the stage, they had to be very quiet. Standing out of the way of the stage hands, they watched the older girls before them go forward and get into their opening positions, waiting for the curtains to rise. Delphie didn't think she'd ever felt so nervous or excited. The lights in the auditorium went down and a hush fell. There was a moment's silence and then the orchestra started to play.

The curtains rose. The older girls were dancing a scene from *Cinderella*. One was a winter fairy, another was a summer fairy, then there was a spring fairy and an autumn fairy. It was the bit of the ballet where all the fairies danced together. They had to do lots of quick footwork including dancing on their pointes and spinning together perfectly in time. Delphie watched, entranced, as they each took it in turns to do a short solo. She couldn't wait until she was old enough to have pointe shoes! One of the stage hands came over to them. "Time to get into your places, girls."



Delphie's class moved up to the curtains. Delphie had to come on alone from the entrance at the back of stage. She waited in the dark, out of sight of the others, hearing the loud applause as the older girls finished and curtsyed.

This is it, she thought, her heart thudding. I'm about to go on!

But just as her nerves almost started to get the better of her, her feet started to tingle. She glanced down at her shoes and stared. They were glowing! Surely she couldn't be about to go to Enchantia? Not at that very moment? Quickly she put down the nutcracker doll she was holding. Bright red, green and gold colours rushed around her as she was lifted up and swept away. Where would she land this time?

She couldn't wait to find out!



A Winterwonderland



Delphie spun down gently to the ground. As the colours around her faded, she stared in wonder. She was standing in a town square covered in snow. Long icicles hung from the roofs of the houses and shops. A man was roasting chestnuts, carol singers were singing and fairy lights were twinkling in all the windows.

It looked wonderfully Christmassy.

Delphie waited for someone to come up and speak to her. The ballet shoes usually only took her to Enchantia when someone was in trouble. Who could need her help this time? She glanced around but everyone seemed to be very cheerful and happy. They were bustling around the stalls, buying food and presents and wishing each other a happy Christmas.

Delphie shivered and rubbed her arms before hurrying over to the chestnut seller's fire to warm up. The stall next to him was selling delicious-smelling gingerbread and tiny carved wooden figures of all the different characters from the ballets. Delphie spotted Cinderella, the swans from *Swan Lake* and Clara holding a tiny nutcracker doll. Delphie wished she had some money so she could buy one each for Lola and Poppy. They would love them!

“Delphie!”

Delphie looked round to see a familiar fairy in a lilac tutu dancing towards her. It was her friend the Sugar Plum Fairy. “Hi, Sugar!” she called.

“Hi, Delphie.” Sugar smiled and gave Delphie a big hug. “I’m so glad you’ve come!” Then she tapped Delphie’s shoulder with her wand. Delphie gasped as she suddenly found herself wearing a long red coat, black gloves and a black scarf.



“There, that will keep you warmer!” said Sugar.

“Thank you!” Delphie said gratefully, pulling the thick red coat around her. “So, what’s going on, Sugar? Why was I called? Everyone looks pretty fine here.”

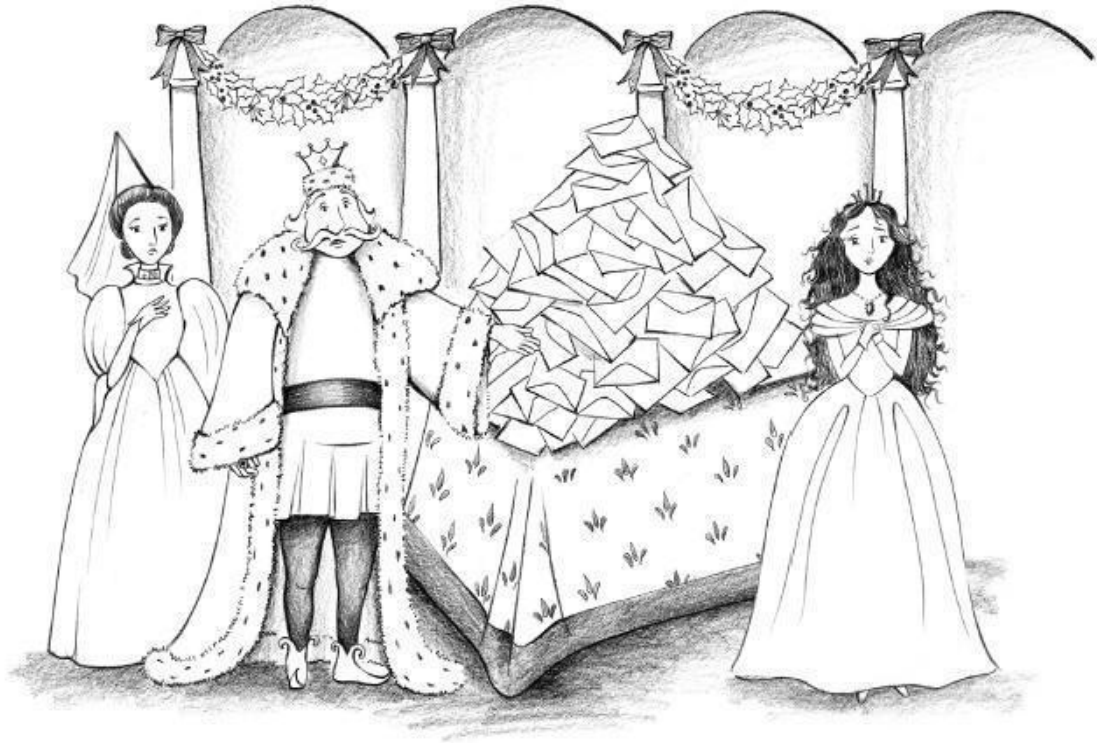
“Yes, but they’re not fine at the Royal Palace,” said Sugar lowering her voice. “It’s King Rat again. He’s been trying to ruin Christmas.”

“Oh no.” Delphie’s heart sank. King Rat was very mean and hated dancing. “What’s he done now?”

“I’ll take you to the palace and the King and Queen will tell you,” Sugar said. “Come on! There isn’t a moment to lose!”

The fairy waved her wand and silver sparkles swirled around them. Then Sugar grabbed Delphie’s hands and they spun away through the air.

When they landed, Delphie found herself in the ballroom of the Royal Palace. It had been decorated with great swags of red-berried holly, golden tinsel and red ribbons and looked very festive. But the King, Queen and Princess Aurelia didn’t.



They were standing at one end of the hall, next to a table that was piled high with golden envelopes and were deep in worried discussion.

“I’m back!” Sugar called. “And Delphie’s with me!”

The royal family looked round. Princess Aurelia’s face lit up. “Oh, Delphie! Thank goodness for that.” She hurried over. “I’m so glad you’re here! King Rat has ruined Christmas!”

“So I’ve heard. Sugar just told me,” said Delphie. “But how can he have managed that?” she asked, curtsying to King Tristan and Queen Isabella.

“Come over here and we’ll explain,” said the King.

He led the way over to a group of comfy chairs near the fireplace and they all sat down. “King Rat hates Christmas,” King Tristan said. “He likes the food and the presents, but he hates all the singing and dancing and he really can’t stand people having a good time.”

“But the rest of us all LOVE Christmas,” said the Queen. “So this year I thought it would be a good idea to have a huge banquet on Christmas Eve.”

“Tonight!” Delphie breathed.

“We were going to invite everyone in the land and have lots of food and dancing and presents,” Princess Aurelia added.

“It sounds amazing!” said Delphie.

“It would have been,” Princess Aurelia replied sadly. “But it’s all gone wrong. The elves came to the palace to help us wrap the presents and when Mother went to check on them, they had all disappeared!”

The Queen nodded. “There was just a little red hat left on the bench with this.” She reached into the pocket of her dress and handed a black card to Delphie.

Delphie looked at it. There was just a scrawling signature in gold:



King Rat

“He must have taken them!” Delphie gasped.

“That’s what we think,” said King Tristan. “And it’s not only the elves who have gone either. The magic Christmas tree has been stolen as well.”

“And we’ve been so worried about the elves and trying to work out how to rescue them, that we haven’t had time to deliver the invitations for the banquet!” wailed Princess Aurelia. “Oh, Delphie, what are we going to do?”



Four Fairies and a Swan



Delphie's thoughts raced. *Kidnapped elves, a missing tree, invitations that hadn't been delivered*

...

"Of course we *have* to rescue the elves, but first things first – we ought to try and get these invitations delivered," she said thoughtfully. "Then at least there can be a Christmas feast even if there aren't any presents and there isn't a tree."

"Delphie's right," Sugar nodded. "Presents and Christmas trees are lovely, but even without them we can have a really good time just dancing and having fun!"

"That's true," said Queen Isabella. "But how are we going to deliver the invitations in time? They have to go all over Enchantia."

"I could try to deliver them," suggested Sugar. "But even flying I won't be able to deliver *all* of them by this evening." She looked at the huge pile on the table.

Delphie frowned. "Isn't there anyone who could help you, Sugar?" She asked. "Other fairies maybe ..." A picture of the stage back at home flashed into her mind. "What about the four fairies from *Cinderella*?" she said. "Do they live in Enchantia? Couldn't they be brought in?"

“Of course!” said Sugar. “Why didn’t I think of that myself? They’re all friends of mine so I’m sure they’ll help. That’s a brilliant idea, Delphie. I’ll summon them straightaway.”

Delphie knew that to summon characters in Enchantia you had to perform some of the dance that they did in the ballet they were from. Sugar lifted her wand and the music from *Cinderella* began to play. She stood for a moment, her right leg turned out, her left leg crossed behind her, and her eyes looking down. As the music speeded up she suddenly stepped forward, full of lightness and energy. She spun around, her arms held above her head, then she jumped straight up and crossed her feet over before landing perfectly in balance. Dancing forward, she took three light leaps.

Delphie recognised the dance – it was that of the spring fairy and was full of light and life. Sugar spun and leaped, her feet crossing over and over until suddenly there was a flash of green light and a fairy appeared twirling round on her pointes, hands touching lightly above her head. She was wearing a knee length moss-green dress and had delicate gauzy wings. A circlet of leaves sat in her dark hair. She jumped gaily in the air too and did a side-stepping cat leap.



“Hello, Sugar!” she said giving the fairy a big hug. “I was just wrapping some Christmas presents for tomorrow. What do you need me for?”

“I’ll tell you when I’ve got the others here too,” said Sugar quickly. “Can you help me? I was going to call the summer fairy next!”

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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