



Chapter Three

It wasn't until a few days later that I looked at my new notebook again. I came home from school one day, noticed it sitting on my dresser, and grabbed it with the intention of drawing the sadness out from a day spent at school.

I loved what going to school was about: the reading, writing, numbers and art. I liked running around and all that stuff. What I didn't like about school was how lonely I was.

I just couldn't seem to make friends.



I know I'm shy and I know that every adult in the world says, 'You'll find your people soon enough,' but I haven't. It's been five years and I haven't.

That particular day had been bad because Miss Flute, our lovely but kind of clueless grade five teacher, decided today was the day we had to partner up to do a (pretty interesting to be honest) project about zoos.

I liked the idea of the project: finding out about zoo animals, choosing an animal and then making a poster all about it. But working with someone else never worked out.

So, like always, everyone paired up and I was left alone. *Again.* There were even numbers in the class too and I watched Sam McGurk ask Miss Flute if he, Tommy and Dave could be a group of three.

This left me, once again, working alone. Bad, bad, day.



So anyway, when I got home, I noticed the notebook, like I said, and decided I needed to draw something to take my mind off school, loneliness, and the general bad dayishness.

I grabbed my pencils from my drawer, took the notebook off the dresser and spread myself out on my bed, ready to draw up a storm.

As I opened the glittery blue cover and marvelled at the bright, white of the first page, I could suddenly hear Granny's voice like she was in the room with me. 'It's time to realise how wonderful you are...'

I jolted up to a sitting position and looked around my room. I was alone. Weird, right? Well, it gets weirder.

I took my nicest grey lead pencil out of my pencil case and decided to get a head start on the zoo project.

After a calm, happy fifteen minutes of



drawing success, I picked up the notebook to look at my picture. I'd drawn a part of the zoo, specifically the bit I loved from our zoo. Well, when I say *our* zoo, I just mean the one that my family visits all the time.

It was where the lion enclosures meet the tiger enclosures. There was a fountain, a café, statues of animals and green grass. It was such a nice place to hang out and it always made me feel calm.

But when I looked at the picture of the zoo... that's when it happened. The lion I'd drawn (a pretty good version of a lion, if I do say so myself, complete with a top hat) started to move on the page. This lion, this grey, hand-drawn lion, turned its head towards me and roared. Not loudly. I mean, not loudly because it was only about five centimetres long, but it was a roar. Kind of like what a tiny lion would make, because... it was a tiny lion.

My eyes widened. My mouth dropped open. My nose flared. The glittering notebook flared suddenly, lighting the room up in a sapphire glow and then I heard a loud buzz. It was the sort of buzz you get when a computer is on in another room. It got louder and louder, and then suddenly I felt weightless.

The world flashed a blinding blue and I disappeared...

And reappeared right in the middle of the zoo.