



Clara the Chocolate Fairy

Special thanks to Narinder Dhani

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ISBN 978-0-545-60534-2

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Previously published as Sweet Fairies #4: *Clara the Chocolate Fairy* by Orchard U.K. in 2013.

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Printed in the U.S.A.

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This edition first printing, March 2014



“I’m so looking forward to this!” Rachel Walker told her best friend, Kirsty Tate, her voice brimming with excitement. The two girls were walking up one of the hills that overlooked Wetherbury. “I’ve never been to a candy factory before. I can’t wait to see inside Candy Land.”

“Me, neither,” Kirsty agreed happily. “Wasn’t it nice of Aunt Helen to arrange





a tour of the factory for my birthday?”
Kirsty’s aunt worked in Candy Land’s
cookie department.

“Yes, and your birthday isn’t until
tomorrow, so it’s
almost like having
an *extra* treat!”

Rachel pointed
out as they climbed
higher up the hill.
Ahead, they could
see the factory and



the big pink-and-white Candy Land sign
over the wrought-iron gates. “Do you
think we might get to try some treats
while we’re on the tour?” Rachel asked
eagerly.

Kirsty grinned. “I hope so!” she
replied. “I’m really looking forward to





seeing the chocolate being made. My favorite kind is the Sticky Toffee Galore—it’s a yummy toffee covered with chocolate!” Then Kirsty’s smile faded. “Remember, though,” she went on, “some of the treats might not taste very good, since Jack Frost and his goblins have the Sugar and Spice Fairies’ magic charms.”

Rachel nodded solemnly. Yesterday, right after she’d arrived to spend spring break with Kirsty, their old friend Honey the Candy Fairy had appeared to whisk the girls off to Fairyland. There they had met Honey’s helpers—the seven Sugar and Spice Fairies! They looked after all the delicious, mouth-watering treats in Fairyland and the human world.





Rachel and Kirsty were very upset when they found out that Jack Frost and his goblins had stolen the Sugar and Spice Fairies' magic charms. But they couldn't believe it when they found out *why* Jack Frost needed the charms—he'd ordered his goblins to build him a castle made entirely of candy and treats!

To make things worse, King Oberon and Queen Titania had explained to the girls that Treat Day was coming up very soon. On Treat Day, the king and queen gave each fairy in Fairyland a basket full of yummy treats to thank them for their hard work all year. But this year there wouldn't be any treat baskets at all if the magic charms weren't returned to the Sugar and Spice Fairies. Jack Frost had





given the seven charms to his goblins to protect in the human world. Rachel and Kirsty had promised to help their fairy friends find them. Then treats everywhere would taste delicious again, and Treat Day wouldn't be ruined for all the fairies.

"It's not just my birthday tomorrow," Kirsty said. "It's Treat Day in Fairyland, too! We *have to* find the missing magic charms before then, Rachel."



Rachel nodded. "Three down, four to go!" she said with a smile. "We're going to find them all, Kirsty—I just know it!"





“I wonder if we’ll see one of our fairy friends at Candy Land today?” Kirsty remarked. “Maybe Jack Frost and his goblins will be there, too.”

“We’ll be ready for them!” Rachel replied. “Look, isn’t that Aunt Helen waiting for us under the Candy Land sign?”

Aunt Helen waved as Rachel and Kirsty hurried toward the factory gates.

“You’re right on time, girls,” she said with a smile. “Come with me! I’ll take you to the reception area where the rest of the tour group is waiting. Are you looking forward to seeing the factory?”

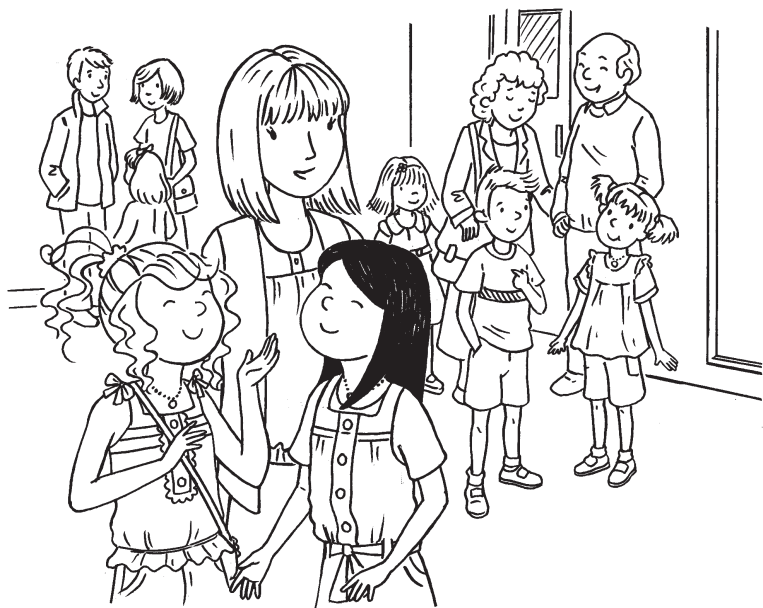
“Oh, YES!” Kirsty and Rachel cried together. Aunt Helen laughed. She led the girls through the gates to a door with RECEPTION printed on it. Inside the office





were several people waiting for the tour, including an older couple and some families with young kids.

The first thing Kirsty noticed in the reception area was the wonderful, sweet, sugary smell! She breathed in deeply, and then smiled when she saw Rachel doing exactly the same thing.





“Girls, I have to rush back to the cookie department,” Aunt Helen told them. “One of the guides, Matt, will show you around, and I’ll meet you in the cafeteria later for lunch.”

“Thanks, Aunt Helen,” Kirsty replied.

A few minutes after Aunt Helen left, a tall man wearing a white apron and hat bounded into the office.

“Welcome to Candy Land!” he announced, beaming at everyone. “I’m Matt, your tour guide today. I’m going to explain how our fabulous, mouth-watering treats are made, and you’ll get to try some of them, too.”





The girls exchanged delighted glances.
Yum!

“This way to the tasting room!” Matt announced, opening a door on the other side of the office. Everyone filed into a bright room that had walls painted with pink-and-white stripes. On a table in the middle of the room were sparkly pink-and-white gift boxes filled with delicious-looking chocolates.





“Look, Sticky Toffee Galore!” Rachel murmured, pointing out one of the boxes to Kirsty.

“Please help yourselves,” Matt told them. “Then we’ll go into the factory, and you can see exactly how your favorite chocolates are made.”

Everyone gathered around the table. Kirsty selected a Sticky Toffee Galore and eagerly popped it into her mouth. But the bitterness of the chocolate made her gasp in disgust. It tasted *terrible!*



Rachel had chosen Golden Crunch, a star-shaped chocolate filled with honeycomb. But, like Kirsty, she was also in for a shock when she tasted it.





“This is awful!” Rachel muttered to Kirsty, trying to swallow the bitter chocolate as fast as possible. “It’s the worst chocolate I’ve ever had!”

Kirsty glanced around the tasting room. The other tour members were looking unimpressed with the chocolates, too. The older couple was making faces at the taste, and one of the little kids burst into tears.



“Gross chocolate, Mommy!” she wailed.

Matt looked flustered. “Oh, I don’t know what’s wrong today!” he said apologetically. “The chocolate tasting is usually a highlight of the tour. Let’s move on.”





“This is all because Jack Frost and his goblins have the Sugar and Spice Fairies’ charms!” Rachel whispered.

Kirsty nodded in agreement as Matt ushered them out of the tasting room.

“So, here we are in the Candy Land factory,” Matt announced. Everyone looked around with interest. The sugary smell was even stronger now, and Rachel and Kirsty could see lots of shiny silver machines making different treats and chocolates. They were operated by workers in spotless white aprons and hats like Matt’s.

“This is where the chocolates are packaged,” Matt went on. He led the group over to a conveyor belt full of chocolates wrapped in brightly colored foil. A young woman was carefully





packing them into gift boxes. “Meet Suzy,” Matt said with a grin. “She’s the fastest packer in the factory!”

“Hello, everyone.” Suzy smiled as she popped the last chocolate into the gift box she was holding, closed it, and set it aside. She immediately began filling an empty box, without letting a single chocolate on the conveyor belt get past her!





“See what I mean?” Matt said, and everyone laughed.

“The foil wrappers look pretty, but the chocolates will taste horrible, thanks to Jack Frost!” Kirsty murmured to Rachel.

Rachel was about to reply when one of the wrappers moving toward them on the conveyor belt caught her eye.





The wrapper was surrounded by a faint golden glow. As Rachel looked more closely, her heart skipped a beat.

“Kirsty, that’s not a chocolate wrapper!” she whispered, pointing at the conveyor belt excitedly. “It’s Clara the Chocolate Fairy!”

