



The Glass Key

In a time so distant that even the stars have almost forgotten it – long before the first human footprint touched the dust of the Earth – the Sun City shone high above in the firmament. Amidst its golden towers and floating gardens, the little Fairy Queen ruled over the light of eternity.

When the age of mankind finally dawned and the world below her stirred to life, she took upon herself a sacred task: she became the Guardian of Dreams and Wishes. Every night, when the world came to rest, the hopes and longings of humanity danced up to her like sparkling lights. With a wise heart and a handful of stardust, she sorted the threads of fate. She separated the somber shadows from the radiant wishes to ensure that only goodness, hope, and joy found their way back into the hearts of those who slept.

As long as she watched over the Dream Machine, the world was safe. But a mistake was soon to change everything...

Chapter Overview

- **1. The Landing on the Moon**
- **2. The Castle of Eternal Light**
- **3. Departure to the First Splinter**
- **4. The Golden Ride**
- **5. Arrival at the Stone Guardian**
- **6. A Spark of Hope in the Desert Sand**
- **7. The Journey in the Glass Comet**
- **8. Can we really do this?**
- **9. The Ride across Infinity**

1. The Landing on the Moon

“Oh my, where on earth have I landed?” the little Fairy Queen whispered. She blinked in alarm and rubbed her eyes, but the view did not change. All around her, it was as dark as a box full of midnight. In the distance, the stars twinkled like tiny diamonds on velvet, but beneath her feet, everything felt quite strange. It was dry, cold, and so unspeakably dusty that she almost had to sneeze.

“How did I even get here?” she asked herself, her voice trembling. Slowly, as if emerging from a fog, the memories began to return.

Back home in the magnificent Sun City, things had been quite turbulent lately. The little Fairy Queen had her hands full sorting through the dreams and wishes of humanity. There were sticky-sweet dreams of strawberry ice cream, brave wishes for riding a bike without training wheels for the first time, and sadly, the heavy, grey worry-dreams of the adults. And those were particularly exhausting.

“I need a break!” she had cried out with a laugh, calling upon her old friend, the wild West Wind, to come and play. Oh, how they had froliced together through the clouds! But then it happened: the wind had been a bit too bold, swooping around a snow-capped mountain peak and – ACHOO! – the cold mountain air tickled his nose so much that he let out the mightiest sneeze in all of history.

The little Fairy Queen was tossed upward, higher than any bird could ever fly. The Earth beneath her shrank until it looked like nothing more than a colorful marble toy, and the moon, with its silver face, drew closer and closer until – *poof* – she landed in the grey dust.

Startled, the little Fairy Queen looked down at herself, and a small cry escaped her lips. “What has happened to me? Where has my glow gone?”

In the past, the little Fairy Queen had been the most colorful sight in the entire firmament. When she laughed, it sounded like the joyful babbling of a brook skipping over glittering pebbles. Her dress was made of woven rainbow light, and her wings sparkled so brightly that the Sun City – that hidden realm within the clouds where all dreams come true – never needed a single lamp.



But here, on the distant moon, she was only a pale shadow of her former self. Her clothes were grey with moon dust, her sparkle had vanished, and her magic felt like a battery that was almost empty. Without the warmth of the Sun City, she grew weaker and weaker.

With trembling fingers, the little Fairy Queen reached for her glittering skirt. There, in a tiny pocket made of spider-silk, she kept her most precious treasure: the Glass Key. It was the only key that could open the gates to the Sun City and the Great Dream Machine – that very machine which ensured that good wishes flew down to the children and adults on Earth each night.

She felt and searched, but the pocket was empty. “It’s gone!” she sobbed. “It must have simply tumbled out of my pocket during the Great Sneeze!”

A single, crystal-clear tear rolled down her cheek, leaving a small trail in the grey dust of the moon. Without the key, she could not return. And without the Guardian of Dreams, the people on Earth would soon experience nothing but empty nights without a single shooting-star wish.

There she sat, the little Fairy Queen, devoid of her glow in the silvery nowhere, looking longingly up at the blue planet that seemed so infinitely far away.

The little Fairy Queen gazed down at the blue planet with great concern. Without the Glass Key, there was no Rainbow Bridge – that shimmering path that connected the Sun City with the world. Without it, the Dream Machine remained silent and cold.

In her mind, she could already see the chaos unfolding: without her nimble

fairy hands, the dreams of humanity would become hopelessly entangled. The bad, grey nightmares would no longer be sunk into the deep, cleansing sea, but could drift like dark thunderclouds over the beds of the people. And the good dreams? They would simply get stuck in the machine like candies in a sticky jar.

“I saw it falling,” she whispered in despair. “It hurtled down like a shower of shooting stars. And then... that flash! CRACK! My centerpiece shattered into seven sparkling shards.”

But before the next tear could sink into the moon dust, something wondrous happened. From the distance, two flying dots approached. They glowed in the colors of strawberry and lemon ice cream and looked as delightfully fluffy as if someone had equipped tiny clouds of cotton candy with wings.

They were the **Lunulis!**

There was little Lio, whose fur shone as yellow as the very first ray of sunshine in the morning.



And his best friend Nala, who shimmered in a soft, gentle red.



Both had tiny golden horns on their heads that vibrated softly whenever they were excited. They were so adorable that for a brief moment, the little Fairy Queen forgot her sorrow, and a tiny smile flickered across her pale face.

The Lunulis had lived up here forever. Since there were no televisions or playgrounds on the moon, they mostly sat on the edge of craters, dangling their legs and watching the hustle and bustle of the Sun City. To them, it was like the most exciting picture book in the world. The fact that a real Fairy Queen—even if a somewhat dusty one—had landed right under their noses was the greatest adventure of their lives!

“Gribbel-grabbel, flup di wup?” Lio babbled, tilting his little head curiously. Nala nodded eagerly, and her golden horns let out a bright *ping*.

The little Fairy Queen didn’t understand a single word of this funny moon-chatter, but she felt the warmth radiating from the two of them. With hands and feet, with wide eyes and sad sighs, she began to tell her story. She pointed to the long way to the snow-capped mountain, mimicked the loud sneezing sound of the wind (“Achoo!”), and finally gestured with a trembling finger down toward the Earth.

As if by a miracle, the moon dust seemed to carry her words to the Lunulis. Or perhaps it was the magic of friendship, for suddenly Lio and Nala began to understand. Their eyes grew very large and round.

“The Glass Key,” Nala suddenly whispered in the clear language of the fairies, her red fur becoming quite soft with compassion. “Fallen like starlight. Shattered into seven pieces.”

Lio stepped forward and bravely nudged the little Fairy Queen with his soft paw. “We saw it, little Queen. We watch everything. The seven shards haven’t simply vanished. They have fallen to seven very special places on Earth.”

The little Fairy Queen’s heart gave a tiny leap. Was there hope for the world's dreams after all?

“Without my key, it is not just my light that fades,” the little Fairy Queen whispered, her voice trembling like a withered leaf in the wind. “The whole world will lose its colors if the nightmares take over. Imagine: no more dreams of flying dragons or brave knights—only grey, heavy thoughts.”

Lio and Nala looked at each other in alarm. Their fluffy ears quivered. They knew they had to help! But no matter how much they squinted their little eyes and searched the Earth, it was as if the world wanted to hide its shards. The ocean shimmered silver and the deserts golden, but the magical glitter of the Glass Key remained nowhere to be found.

“Cheer up, little Queen!” Lio cried, turning a cartwheel in excitement. “If our eyes aren’t enough, we need eyes that can look through time and to the very edge of the universe. We are taking you to the Moonstone Seer!”

The way to the Seer’s castle was long. As they wandered across the dusty craters, the Lunulis told stories of ancient times. The little Fairy Queen was more than a little amazed to hear that the Seer had watched as the giant dinosaurs stomped through the primeval forests of Pangaea.

“In the old days, everything was one giant puzzle piece,” Nala explained wisely. “But the Moonstone Seer saw the continents drift apart, how the first humans made fire, and how small wooden huts turned into giant, glowing cities. He never forgets a single detail!”

Finally, they reached the castle. It was built of dark, smooth stone that shimmered as deep blue as the night sky just before bedtime. Inside, it was cool and quiet, but as they entered the Great Hall, something wondrous

happened.

There, on a throne of frozen starlight, sat the Moonstone Seer. He was ancient; his beard was as long and white as the tail of a comet, and his skin shimmered like a pearl. As soon as he caught sight of the little Fairy Queen, he began to glow – so bright and friendly that the bitter cold of the moon simply melted away.



The little Fairy Queen felt a warm tingling sensation shoot through her wings. The Moonstone Seer bowed his head. His eyes were like two deep lakes, reflecting the entire history of the Earth. He gazed at the Fairy Queen's pale little face and her dull dress.

“Child,” he said, in a voice that sounded as gentle as distant thunder, “what has happened to you and your glow?”

The little Fairy Queen was about to begin a long explanation, but the old man raised a hand with a smile. “I know of the wind's sneeze. I saw the glass flash that struck your centerpiece. I know that the seven shards now lie down there, hidden in places as different as day and night.”

He leaned forward, and in his eyes, an image of seven sparkling dots appeared upon the blue globe of the Earth. “But be warned: the search will not be easy. The shards will only find their way back if you prove that a true queen is more than just pomp and glory. You will have obstacles before you!”

The little Fairy Queen lowered her head. The swaying of the Lunulis and the warmth of the Moonstone Seer gave her courage, but speaking the truth was heavier than a mountain of iron. "... I just wanted to feel a little bit of freedom," she whispered, and a thick tear dripped onto her dusty shoes. "I thought the Dream Machine would run for a short while without me. I just wanted to dance and laugh. But now I know: without me, everything falls out of rhythm."

The Moonstone Seer nodded slowly. "Honesty is the brightest light, little Fairy Queen. Brighter than any sun." He handed her a handkerchief that smelled of lavender and distant stars. "You have seven days. When the full moon shows its round, silver face at the highest point, the seven shards must be reunited. Otherwise, the Rainbow Bridge will turn to dust, and the Sun City will remain an unreachable dream forever."

Seven days! The little Fairy Queen felt quite dizzy. But the Moonstone Seer smiled mysteriously and raised his staff. Suddenly, a small, glistening point of light darted through the castle window, swirled around the little Fairy Queen, and then shot back into the distance.

"That is my shooting star," he explained. "It will carry you. But take care: it can bring you to Earth, and can only be used one more time for another great leap. Use this power wisely!"

With pounding hearts, the little Fairy Queen, Lio, and Nala made their way to the great lunar crater. The rim of the crater was so enormous that they felt like tiny ants. But there it was: the shooting star waited impatiently, sparkling in gold and silver, scattering glittering sparks into the grey moon dust.

"Hold on tight!" cried the little Fairy Queen. She grabbed the glowing tail, Lio clung to her little pouch, and Nala held fast to Lio's fluffy fur.

2. The Flight through the Night

With a sound like a thousand tiny bells, they shot forward. *Whoosh!* The moon grew smaller and smaller as they raced through the black velvet night at incredible speed. The Earth rose to meet them like a giant blue eye, gazing up at them expectantly.

They zoomed over snow-capped peaks that glistened like dollops of whipped cream in the sun, and over deep green forests that smelled of adventure. The little Fairy Queen saw the tiny lights of the cities below. She knew that the humans could not see her – to them, she was merely a brief, bright streak across the sky, a sight that moved them to make a wish.

As they flew past the Sun City, which sat enthroned in the clouds like a palace made of cotton candy, the little Fairy Queen felt a pang in her heart. "That is where I belong," she thought wistfully. But Nala sensed her sorrow. With her soft paws, she gave the Fairy Queen a tight hug. "Don't worry, we will find the pieces. We Lunulis have eyes like eagles!"

The ground was now approaching at a breakneck pace. The trees grew taller, the roar of the sea could be heard, and the shooting star slowed down until it glided to the ground as light as a feather.

They landed in the middle of a beautiful, blooming meadow. The scent of fresh grass and wild flowers wafted toward them – a fragrance the little Fairy Queen had always loved so dearly. But time was of the essence. The sun was already beginning to sink behind the horizon. Quickly, she tucked the little shooting star away and looked around.

"Where do we start?" Lio asked, shaking the travel dust from his fur. The little Fairy Queen looked about. Somewhere here, among the blades of grass, the mountains, or perhaps even near the humans, the first shard had to be lying.

She took a deep breath. The spicy forest air, smelling of moss and wet ferns, felt wonderful, yet her heart was heavy. "Six days," she whispered, smoothing her pale dress, which looked almost grey in the shadows of the giant trees. "Only six days left, and my magic will blow away like dandelions in the wind."

Lio and Nala searched tirelessly. They rooted through soft moss and even peeked under the caps of fat mushrooms, but aside from shiny beetles and

sticky dewdrops, they found nothing. The forest was beautiful, but it kept the glass shard well hidden.

"We need help," the little Fairy Queen said resolutely, looking longingly up at the sky where the moon already lurked pale behind the clouds. "The Moonstone Seer... he promised."

Hardly had she finished the thought when the sky tore open. A golden streak of light hurtled down, faster than any falcon. It grew larger and brighter until, with a soft "Plop!", it landed right at their feet. It was a glowing star, as large as a basketball, shimmering in all the colors of the rainbow.

Slowly, the star unfolded, and out tumbled a Lunuli who looked so strong and adventurous that the little Fairy Queen knew at once: reinforcements had arrived! It was Neoli.



His fur was as turquoise as the sea, and he was a bit larger than Lio and Nala.

"Hey!" Neoli cried, giving himself a good shake so that tiny star-sparks flew from his fur. "You simply forgot me back on the moon! Do you have any idea how boring it is up there when you have no one to cuddle with? That was truly rude!"

Lio and Nala rolled about with laughter and greeted their strong friend with a cheerful nose-nudge. But Neoli immediately turned serious again and planted his fluffy paws on his hips.

"I didn't just come here to play," he announced, and his golden horns began to glow with excitement. "The Moonstone Seer gave me a message for you.

He saw in his great mirror where the first shard is to be found.”

The little Fairy Queen held her breath. “Where, Neoli? Where must we go?”

Neoli pointed his paw toward the south, where the trees grew thinner and the distant murmur of a city could be heard. “He said the first piece of your Glass Key lies hidden deep within an **old arena**. A place where many people used to gather to watch heroes. There, among the ancient stones and the whispers of the past, your key-piece awaits.”

3. Departure to the 1st Splinter

The little Fairy Queen felt new hope flowing through her veins. An arena! That sounded like a place full of stories – exactly the right spot for a magical key-shard.

“Thank you, Neoli,” she said, giving the large Lunuli a brief hug. “I am so glad you are with us now. You three Lunulis and I – we are a real super-team now!”

“A team of fluffy fur and fairy dust!” Lio cried out enthusiastically.

“Keep your eyes open,” Neoli warned as he bravely led the way. “In an old arena, there are many nooks and crannies. And an evil wizard is said to live there as well. So, we must be faster than time itself!”

“An evil wizard?” the little Fairy Queen whispered, her voice trembling slightly. “If he gets even a single shard into his spindly fingers, he could turn the wishes of humanity into dark shadows. We mustn’t lose a single second!”

It was her greatest luck that Neoli had warned them. The little Fairy Queen immediately reached into her pouch and pulled out the folded shooting star. With a strong puff of breath, it unfolded back into its golden glory, but the Fairy Queen felt that the star’s light was growing weaker.

“This is our last great journey with you,” she whispered to the magical light. “Bring us safely to the Land of the Boot, to the old arena!”

Hardly had her words faded when the shooting star began to vibrate. A gentle pull took hold of the Fairy Queen and the Lunulis, who clung tightly to her.

They zipped through colorful meadows and forests, over lakes and rivers. The Lunulis giggled with excitement, while the little Fairy Queen, with her eyes closed, absorbed the final sparks of the shooting star’s magic.

With one last golden flash, the shooting star dissolved – at the exact moment they pierced through a thick blanket of clouds. Below them stretched a city whose ancient rooftops glowed in the warm light of dusk. And there, amidst the tangle of old alleys and new houses, rose a colossal ruin, right in front of which they landed.



It was the Colosseum of Rome. Mighty and sublime it stood there, a stone testament to long-forgotten times when gladiatorial combat and thundering cheers filled the air.

“We are here,” Neoli breathed in awe. The Fairy Queen nodded, her eyes sparkling with determination. Their journey had led them here – now it was time to unravel the first mystery in the heart of Rome.

Inside the Colosseum, it smelled of ancient stone and adventure. But suddenly, the four friends froze. A sound reached their ears that made their blood run cold: a hoarse, wicked cackle echoing off the cold walls.

“Finally... mine!” a croaking voice muttered.

They peeked out from behind a fallen column. There he stood: the evil wizard. He was as thin as a withered branch, wearing a cloak as black as a void-filled universe, and on his head bobbed a crooked, pointed hat adorned with ugly grey stars. In his bony hand, he already held something that flashed brightly in the faint moonlight – the first shard of the Glass Key!

“With this shard, I shall rule the Dream Machine,” the wizard hissed, his eyes glowing greedily. “I will send the humans the heaviest dreams they have ever had!”

The little Fairy Queen knew she had no time for fear. If the wizard left the Colosseum, the first shard would be lost forever. She reached deep into her

pouch and felt the cool wood of a small, glittering object. It was her wand, a gift from her dearest fairy friend of old. It was not as powerful as the Glass Key, but it was filled with the magic of friendship.

“Get ready,” she whispered to Lio, Nala, and Neoli. “You must distract him while I try to snatch the shard!”

The Lunulis nodded resolutely. Their soft cotton-candy fur puffed up with courage. With a brave leap, they stepped out from the shadows, while the little Fairy Queen gripped her wand tightly and whispered the first words of an ancient fairy spell...

„Lūx in mē lūceat!“

A radiant flash of light, as colorful as an exploding rainbow, shot from her wand into the dark night of the Colosseum. The wizard stumbled backward, clutching his eyes and cursing so terribly that even the ancient stones of the arena seemed to tremble.

“This was only the beginning, little Fairy Queen!” he bellowed, as he vanished in a cloud of black, foul-smelling smoke. “You won’t find the other shards so easily!”

Silence returned to the arena. Only the excited thumping of the three Lunulis' hearts could still be heard. The little Fairy Queen knelt down and picked up the glass shard that had been left behind in the dust. It felt warm and pulsed gently against her palm. “One out of seven,” she whispered, stowing the treasure safely in her pouch. “We did it!”

At that moment, a small, silver-grey dove fluttered down from the upper tiers of the arena. She looked a bit disheveled, but her eyes shone with wisdom. “I know that wizard,” she cooed softly. “He has stolen many dreams. But I also know someone who can help you. Far to the north, where the water is as blue as lapis stones and the ice glitters like diamonds, lives the King of the Whales. He dwells by the island of Iceland and can surely help you find the second shard.”

The little Fairy Queen looked at the dove in amazement. “Iceland? The land of fire and ice?” The dove nodded eagerly. “If you wish, I will take you to him.”

The little Fairy Queen did not hesitate. She knew that time was ticking away relentlessly toward the full moon. Without the shooting star, they now had to

trust in the power of nature. “Hold on tight, my friends!” she cried. She cast a small Lightness Spell on Lio, Nala, and Neoli, making them as light as feathers so they could cling to the dove’s plumage.

The journey to Iceland was quite different from the ride on the shooting star. They felt the wind in their hair, smelled the salt of the ocean, and watched as the green forests of Europe slowly gave way to the rugged, black volcanic rocks of the north.

When they finally reached the coast of Iceland, the Lunulis could hardly believe their eyes. Here, mountains spat fire into the sky, and the ground spewed water high into the air, while right beside them, giant glaciers slid into the sea. It was a world of contrasts – just like the dreams of humanity.

The dove circled over a lonely bay. “This is it,” she cooed.

The little Fairy Queen stepped to the edge of a cliff. Below her, the waves lashed against the black sand; then, the friends spotted an entrance at the foot of the cliff and went inside. Deep within a cave, they finally saw a colorful play of light dancing upon the water, as the King of the Whales was reflected in it.



“What a magnificent creature!” the little Fairy Queen whispered. Her heart pounded almost as loudly as the distant rumbling of the earth. The whale was as large as an entire cloud-castle in the Sun City. His skin seemed to capture the light in a different way – at times sparkling like a ruby, at others glowing golden, simply beautiful.

“Greetings, little travelers,” the whale’s voice boomed. It was not speaking with a mouth, but a deep hum that could be felt throughout one’s entire body. He did not merely float above the water; he seemed to be woven from pure stardust and ocean waves. “What brings a Fairy Queen and three fluffy moon-beings to my hidden grotto?”

The little Fairy Queen took a step forward. “Wise friend of the seas,” she began and bowed deeply. “I am searching for the Glass Key of the Sun City. You are said to know where a piece of it has landed.”

The whale closed his huge, wise eyes for a moment. “I felt the impact. The glass sang a song of longing and light as it plunged into that place. It is located in Mexico.”

“Be careful,” the whale rumbled, his deep bass making the water in the grotto tremble. “There, in the shadow of the ruins, dwells the dangerous Time Witch. She collects all the gold and riches of the world as if they were mere pebbles, guarding them in her dark chamber.”

The little Fairy Queen swallowed hard. A Time Witch! That sounded like a task far beyond her fading strength. Since her fall onto the dusty moon, she felt as if her internal magic battery was almost empty. Every small spell, every sparkle, and especially the battle against the spindly wizard in the Colosseum had drained her glow. Her dress no longer shone colorfully but appeared almost as translucent as morning mist. Yet she thought of the people on Earth and their endangered dreams – and her resolve remained as firm as a rock.

“I thank you from the bottom of my heart, wise friend,” she said, her voice sounding firm despite her exhaustion. With one last grateful look at the floating whale and the faithful dove, she turned away. Together with the Lunulis, she trudged through the crunching snow toward the great glacier, which loomed in the distance like a giant blue diamond.

Once there, Lio and Nala looked up the steep ice walls, puzzled. “And now?” Nala asked, nervously tugging at her fluffy ear. “Mexico is terribly far away. Are we supposed to swim across the entire ocean?”

Hardly was the question asked when something wondrous happened. The cold glacier wind shifted and suddenly began to smell of summer rain and warm gold. A bright light shimmered over the ice, so bright that the friends had to squint their eyes. When they looked up again, they could hardly believe what they saw.

In the midst of the icy wilderness stood a creature so majestic that even the stars would have paled with envy: a Magical Unicorn. Its fur did not just shimmer; it seemed to be woven from liquid sunlight, and its golden horn cast tiny, dancing rainbows onto the glacier walls.



“Hello, I am Goldie,” said the unicorn, and its voice sounded like a thousand delicate bells playing in the wind. Its tail, made of pure light, fluttered gently in the icy glacier wind.

“Wow, you are unimaginably beautiful!” Lio blurted out, while Nala was so amazed that her golden horns began to emit an excited *ping-ping*. A unicorn – the two moon-beings had never seen anything so glittering and majestic! Goldie truly shimmered in every shade of gold, from bright sunbeams to warm honey, and its glossy fur rivaled the sun for the brightest sparkle.

“I had been visiting old friends here in Iceland, the Ice Trolls, but now it is time for me to journey homeward,” Goldie explained, gently nudging the little Fairy Queen with its soft nostrils. “I am on my way to Yucatán, a sunny peninsula in Mexico. It’s a wonderful place for unicorns like me to live. I would be happy to take you there.”

The friends didn’t need to be told twice...

4. The Golden Ride

“That is fantastic!” cried the little Fairy Queen, and for the first time in a long while, she felt a small spark of hope and joy rising within her. This magical encounter was like a little spell that gave her courage.

With glowing eyes, she carefully climbed onto Goldie’s warm back. Lio and Nala followed her with little leaps and snuggled into the unicorn’s soft, golden fur. Goldie lowered its head slightly, took a deep breath, and then – *whoosh!* – it soared into the air with an elegant bound.

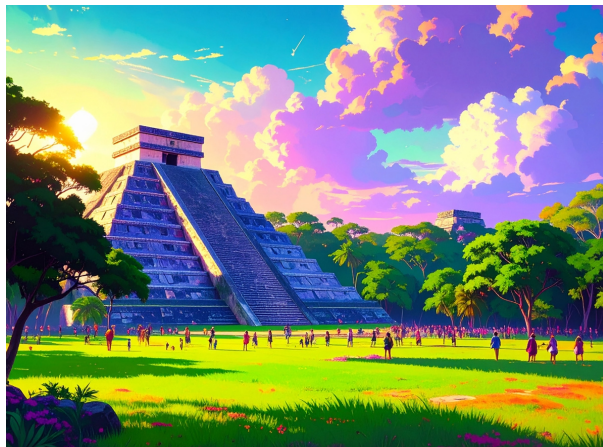
They weren’t just flying. They were **dancing** through the sky! Beneath them, the icy mountains vanished, and an infinite ocean, glittering like a giant blue carpet, spread out before them. The clouds looked like massive mountains of cotton candy, through which Goldie glided effortlessly. The wind rushed past their ears, but it was a warm wind that smelled of salt and distant adventures.

“I love traveling!” the little Fairy Queen shouted, her hair billowing in the wind. She had almost forgotten what it felt like to fly freely, without the worry of the Dream Machine.

Goldie led them southward, always toward the warm sunlight. The Lunulis giggled with delight as they saw the fish flashing in the waves below. After a while, the deep blue of the ocean turned into a brighter turquoise, and dark green patches appeared on the horizon.

“We are here,” Goldie said, its voice now a bit more hushed. “This is the land of the funny hats: Mexico! And there, amidst all that green, lies the Yucatán Peninsula.”

Then, they landed right in the heart of Chichén Itzá.



The ruins of the ancient city rose from the jungle like petrified giants. Everywhere, vines entwined themselves around the grey stones, as if the forest wanted to hold the temples fast with green arms. On the horizon, majestic and a bit frightening, sat the massive pyramid with its countless steps.

“From here on, we must be as quiet as shadows,” the little Fairy Queen whispered, her voice sounding muffled in the damp jungle air. “The Time Witch tolerates no guests, and they say her ears can even hear the grass growing.”

The Lunulis nodded eagerly, but when they reached the cave entrance beneath the temple, they stopped dead in their tracks. Giant boulders blocked the way, heavy and unconquerable. Neoli, Lio, and Nala pushed and shoved with their fluffy shoulders until their fur crackled with effort, but the stones did not move an inch.

The little Fairy Queen saw the exhaustion in her friends' faces. She knew what she had to do, even though it pained her. With trembling fingers, she drew her wand. She traced a glowing, horizontal figure-eight in the dark air – the symbol of infinity – and called out with the last of her strength:

“Omnia impedimenta seipsa tollant!”

With a deep rumble, as if the earth itself were taking a deep breath, the rocks floated aside and cleared the path. But the little Fairy Queen slumped slightly. Her glow was now so weak that she looked almost like a tiny grey mouse.

“My wand... it is running empty,” she breathed to the worried Lunulis. “In the Sun City, I could recharge it with the light of the morning sun, but down here... down here, I lose a piece of myself with every spell.” The Lunulis now understood why she was so sparing with her magic. Every miracle brought her one step closer to total exhaustion.

Inside the pyramid, their breath caught. It was as if the sun itself had moved into the mountain, so brightly did the gold and precious stones sparkle on the walls. And there, in the midst of all that wealth, sat the Time Witch upon a chair of pure gold. Beside her stood an hourglass as tall as a grown man. The witch seemed to be in a deep sleep, her breath rasping and steady.

“Very carefully,” the little Fairy Queen whispered. “Just a few more steps...”

But just as they approached the pedestal where the second glass key-shard sparkled, the witch snapped her eyes open. They were yellow and piercing, like those of an owl.

“Thieves! Time-thieves in my realm!” she shrieked, her voice sounding like breaking glass. With a swift movement one wouldn't have expected from the old woman, she leaped up and grabbed her gigantic hourglass.

“Ssssst!”

With a malicious grin, she flipped the glass over. In that moment, something terrible happened. The air in the cave became as thick as sticky syrup. The little Fairy Queen wanted to shout, “Run!”, but out of her mouth came only an infinitely slow:

“Ruuuuuuuuuuu-nnnnnnnnnn...”

Every step felt as if they had to lift tons of weight. Nala wanted to reach for Lio's paw, but her arm moved so slowly it seemed to take hours. The Time Witch, however, moved quite normally. She strolled laughing around the frozen friends and patted her hourglass.

“In here, time belongs to me alone!” she mocked. “And while you struggle to perform even a single blink of an eye, I shall take your magical treasures for myself!”

“Nooooooooow iiiiiiiis ouuuuuuuuuuur chaaaaaaaance!” cried the little Fairy Queen, but in the thick air, her voice sounded like the song of a whale underwater. With infinite effort, she reached for her wand. It felt as though she had to pull her arm through heavy, wet sand. Inch by inch, she fought against the invisible resistance until she finally freed the tip of her wand.

Once more, she gathered the tiny remnant of her magical sparkle. She whirled a glowing, horizontal figure-eight into the dark cavern vault, aimed straight at the heart of the massive hourglass, and cried:

“*Meum est tempus, me nunc circumvolvitur!*”

A glistening silver beam shot from the tip of her wand. As it struck the hourglass, something incredible happened: the falling grains of sand inside the clock stopped mid-flight, as if frozen solid. The Time Witch, who had just been laughing maliciously, froze mid-motion like a lifeless statue.

“Did you see what I did?” the little Fairy Queen asked excitedly, and suddenly the words tumbled out of her quite normally again. The heavy time-spell was

broken! “I stopped time! Now we can defeat her!”

The Lunulis cheered softly and swirled around with joy. With nimble paws, they crept up to the petrified witch. Neoli, the largest and bravest of them, climbed as swiftly as a squirrel onto the golden throne and grabbed the cool glass rim of the gigantic hourglass.

But the little Fairy Queen noticed with a start that her own spell was beginning to flicker. The grains of sand in the clock trembled suspiciously and began to trickle down very slowly once more. The witch was already blinking with one eye.

“We must hurry!” the little Fairy Queen cried, full of energy. “The spell is breaking!”

At the very last second, Neoli pulled the hourglass toward him, heaved it upward with all his might, and – *CRASH!* – flipped it completely over at once. Suddenly, a miracle occurred: Neoli didn’t become slow; he became blindingly fast! He darted through the pyramid with the hourglass so quickly that he could only be seen as a colorful cotton-candy blur.

“Catch me if you can!” his laughter seemed to echo as he burst out of the ruins with the hourglass in his arms. The Time Witch, who was now also wide awake and twice as fast due to the inverted clock, went charging after him, cursing loudly. Her feet hardly touched the ground, so great was her haste to reclaim her beloved treasure.

But hardly had the witch taken her first step out of the protective shadow of the pyramid into the bright sunlight of Yucatán when the unthinkable happened. Without the magical aura of her cave and the power of the hourglass in her own hands, her strength vanished. The witch was, in truth, thousands of years old – only her magic had kept her alive.

Within a few moments, right before the friends’ eyes, she grew ancient; her form became paler and paler until she finally crumbled into fine grey dust, which the warm jungle wind simply blew away.

The little Fairy Queen took a deep breath. Under the golden throne, where the witch had kept watch, the next shard of the Glass Key now shone brightly. She bent down and held the second glass piece in her hands. It felt warm and full of hope. Carefully, she placed it with the first part in her pouch. “Only five more,” she whispered happily.

As they stepped out of the cave, Goldie was already waiting impatiently in the shadow of the vines. When the unicorn saw Neoli, still hopping around triumphantly with the hourglass in his arms, it began to laugh. “Well, you certainly showed that old witch, didn’t you?” Goldie whinnied in amusement, kicking up a bit of dust with its hooves.

Neoli hopped gleefully from one leg to the other, hugging the captured hourglass tight. The danger was averted, and the jungle of Yucatán visibly breathed a sigh of relief. “That was an adventure!” the little Fairy Queen finally said with a deep, relieved sigh. She looked at her pouch, where two precious treasures were now safely stored. “We did it!”

But even as she smiled triumphantly, her gaze grew a little glassy. The radiant light that once surrounded her was now only a faint glimmer, as if she were a candle flickering in a draft. The battle against the Time Witch had almost completely exhausted her magical reserves.

They all felt the shadow of haste upon their shoulders. Five days remained – five short days before the gates to the Sun City would vanish forever into the mist.

Suddenly, the sun above them darkened, but it was no cloud. A colossal shadow fell over the ruins of Chichén Itzá. With a mighty rustle, a gigantic bird landed before the small group. His plumage was as black as the deepest night, and his wingspan was as wide as a small airplane.

“Do not be afraid. I am Condo, the Condor,” the majestic bird introduced himself, with a voice that sounded like the wind among the mountain peaks. He bowed his head respectfully before the Fairy Queen. “The Moonstone Seer has sent me. He watches over you and knew that you now require another companion of the skies. On my journey here, I saw it sparkling – the third piece of your Glass Key. It rests upon the shoulders of a giant made of stone, who keeps watch over the ocean.”

Then, however, a seriousness settled in his wise eyes. “But be on your guard. News of the key’s power has spread like wildfire. The darkest figures of the world are greedy for the dreams and wishes of humanity. We must depart at once!”

Without hesitation, the little Fairy Queen and the Lunulis climbed onto the broad, warm back of the condor. Condo beat his massive wings only a few times, and already they shot steeply up into the sky. Goldie whinnied a golden “Good luck!” after them as they were already flying over the deep green carpet of the jungle.

“Our destination is Brazil,” Condo explained as he glided effortlessly through the warm thermals. “There, a statue stands so high that it touches the clouds. The people call it the ‘Cristo Redentor’ – or simply the Statue of Christ. Let us begin.”

5. Arrival at the Stone Guardian

The journey was a feast for the senses. Soon, the endless green of the Amazon rainforest stretched out beneath them. The little Fairy Queen watched in amazement as she saw the famous pink dolphins deep in the river below, leaping from the water like living gemstones. Flocks of parrots in every color of the rainbow accompanied them for part of their journey, as if wanting to sing new courage into the Fairy Queen's heart.

"Hold on tight! Down there lies Rio de Janeiro!" Condo suddenly cried.

The little Fairy Queen and the Lunulis leaned forward cautiously. Before them opened a bay so blue and glittering that it hardly seemed real. And there, atop the summit of Mount Corcovado, it stood: a giant white statue, spreading its arms wide as if wanting to embrace the entire world.



The structure was even more massive and peaceful than the little Fairy Queen had ever imagined in her wildest dreams back in the Sun City. The white surface glowed in the sunlight like pure alabaster. But right on the shoulder of the statue, exactly where the gaze looked out toward the vast sea, there was a promising flash.

"There it is!" Nala whispered in awe. The third piece of the Glass Key was already waiting for them, shimmering in the sunlight. But somewhere between the tourists and the shadows of the statue, perhaps something else was waiting...

Condo landed gently on a nearby roof, his talons retracted. But hardly had the friends felt solid ground beneath their feet when their hearts nearly stopped.

There, against the brilliant white stone of the Statue of Christ, a dark shadow clung like a gaunt spider. It was the evil wizard again! His crumpled hat fluttered in the wind as he climbed the arm of the stone giant with surprising speed. He reached the open hand of the statue, where the third key-shard sparkled like a captive star. Suddenly he paused and whirled his spindly hands through the air in a wild, hateful gesture. A silent shimmer emanated from his fingers, yet at first, nothing seemed to happen.

With a malicious grin, the wizard grabbed the sparkling glass, leaped onto the head of the statue with a single bound, and slipped as swiftly as a rat into a small maintenance opening. He was gone!

"I... I cannot lift my wings anymore!" Condo suddenly croaked in horror. He tried desperately to spread his mighty wings, but they hung heavy and powerless at his side. "That was his curse! When he moved his hands, he robbed me of the power of flight!" The proud condor trembled with fear; never before had he been so helpless.

"We must go after him! We cannot let him escape with the piece!" Neoli cried, his little heart beating so wildly that his fluffy fur shook. He stared determinedly up at the stone giant.

"But how?" Nala asked with tear-filled eyes. "The statue is as high as a mountain and stands on one itself. Here on Earth, we are as heavy as stones, not light and floating like on our moon. Without Condo, we will never get up there!"

The little Fairy Queen looked down at herself. Her dress was now almost colorless, and she felt as tired as if she hadn't slept for a thousand years. But as she looked into the desperate faces of her friends, she knew she had to tap into her very last reserve of strength. For the dreams, for the people, for hope.

"Do not be afraid," she whispered in a voice that was low but firm. "As long as a spark of light still burns within me, I will pave the way."

Once more, she reached into her pouch and gripped the cool handle of her wand. It felt heavier in her hand than ever before. With a final burst of willpower, she raised her arm and traced the shimmering, horizontal figure-eight into the azure sky of Brazil. The lines trembled, but they glowed in a soft

golden hue. Then she spoke the ancient words:

"Ad astra una volēmus!"

As if carried by an unseen hand, the little Fairy Queen and the Lunulis rose from the ground. A gentle golden shimmer enveloped them, and they floated majestically upward toward the radiant white giant.

"My strength only reaches this far," the little Fairy Queen whispered to her wand as they reached the massive hand of the statue. Her voice was little more than a breath. "Quickly now! We have only this one moment!"

From their vantage point on the stone hand, a dramatic sight unfolded: the wizard crouched in a narrow crevice inside the statue. He was hastily fumbling with an iron-clad treasure chest to secure the stolen shard and vanish forever. When he noticed the friends, his face contorted into a hateful grimace.

"Too late, you tiny pests!" he shrieked. "This piece belongs to me! With its power, I shall clothe the dreams of the world in shadows!" With a wild gesture, he hurled a hissing, red-hot fireball at them.

But he had reckoned without the Lunulis. Lio, Nala, and Neoli darted through the air like colorful ball lightning. They were so nimble that the fireball could not catch them, and with a clever maneuver, they simply diverted the heat into the void. While the wizard flailed his arms in confusion, the little Fairy Queen gathered her last bit of determination.

Once more she traced the figure-eight in the sky, and her eyes glowed with a deep, solemn blue.

"Malum in mundo in aeternum vincitor!" she cried out against the evil.

A rope of pure white light shot from her wand. It wound itself around the wizard like a living snake, binding him tight and holding him prisoner so that he could no longer move a single finger. In that same instant, a powerful beat of wings broke the silence: Condo was free! The dark curse had evaporated like mist in the sun, and the mighty bird rose majestically from the roof into the sky.

"Never again shall you be able to rob the dreams and wishes of humanity!" the little Fairy Queen cried triumphantly to the bound wizard. With nimble fingers, she took the third piece of the Glass Key and stowed it safely in her pouch. The glass felt cool and victorious.

Together they went down to Condo, who was waiting for them with wings outspread. “We did it!” the Lunulis cheered, dancing in a circle with joy. “Three pieces are ours! Only four more, and the key will be whole!”

But the little Fairy Queen did not answer. She sat down exhaustedly beside Condo, her head resting heavily against his plumage. Her dress, once so colorful, was now almost as translucent as glass, and her hands trembled slightly. The spell had demanded nearly everything from her. She managed a weak smile, but in her eyes stood a great question: would her strength be enough for the remaining four pieces?

As Rio de Janeiro slowly sank into the golden light of the evening sun before them, a thoughtful silence settled over the small group. The Lunulis' cheering had died down, giving way to a deep realization: there was still much to be done.

Inside the little Fairy Queen's pouch, three glass shards now rested. They felt heavy, charged with a magic that smelled of home and starlight. But in her mind's eye, the little Fairy Queen saw the four empty spaces before her—four missing puzzle pieces, without which the Rainbow Bridge to the Sun City would end in nothingness forever.

“Four pieces left,” she whispered to the wind that brushed gently through Condo's feathers. “Four sparks of light, scattered somewhere in the vast world.”

Her friends gazed into the distance, where the sea touched the sky. They knew they were not only fighting against time, which trickled away as relentlessly as the sand in the witch's hourglass. They were fighting against shadows they did not even know yet. What dark wizards might be lurking in the deep caves of the earth? What riddles did the icy peaks or the endless deserts hold in store for them?

Every further step on this adventurous journey was a step into the unknown. Yet, as the little Fairy Queen closed her tired eyes and snuggled deep into Condo's plumage, enjoying the evening light, she knew one thing: as long as they had each other, no path was too long and no danger too great.

Just as exhaustion weighed like a heavy cloak upon the shoulders of the little Fairy Queen, the dust swirled up behind them. A small, colorful creature scurried toward them with nimble legs. It wore a sombrero almost as wide as itself and held a beautifully decorated guitar in its arms.



“Hola!” the little fellow cried, his eyes flashing with delight. “I am Pepe. Born in Mexico and moved to Brazil! I heard the singing of your glass shards on the wind. You are looking for the fourth piece, aren't you?”

The little Fairy Queen nodded in surprise. Amidst all the dangers, this tiny guest seemed like a colorful ray of hope. “I know the path that fate has drawn for you. A clue lies hidden at a pyramid as old as time itself. It is guarded by a mighty cat without a nose, enthroned in the distant desert sands of Egypt,” Pepe explained.

The Lunulis' heads slumped. “Egypt?” Lio wailed softly. “That's on the other side of the world! By the time we get there, the full moon will be long gone and the Sun City lost.”

But Pepe only grinned broadly and struck the strings of his guitar with force. *Klong-di-ring!* A deep, vibrating tone filled the jungle, so powerful that the birds in the trees fell silent for a moment. Before their feet, the ground began to shimmer. Colors that shouldn't even exist swirled in a circle until a glowing, multicolored portal opened.

“Don't worry, friends! My guitar knows no distances,” Pepe shouted over the magical noise. “Jump in! The song will carry you to Egypt!”

The little Fairy Queen and the Lunulis gathered all their courage and hopped right into the sea of colors. It felt like sliding through a rainbow – a whirling, tickling jumble of sounds and light. And just as quickly as the song had begun, it fell silent again.

“Woooow, that was faster than the blink of an eye!” Neoli marveled, giving himself a good shake to get the colorful travel-dust out of his fur.

They were no longer in the damp, green jungle. The air was now dry and hot as an oven, and beneath their feet crunched the finest golden-yellow sand. But they were not alone.

Suddenly, a most peculiar creature appeared right before them. It was small and seemed to consist entirely of swirling grains of sand, held together as if by magic. Upon its head, however, sat a hat of pure, heavy gold that shone so brightly in the glistening Egyptian sun that the little Fairy Queen had to squint her eyes. The little sand-being looked at them expectantly, while behind it, the massive silhouettes of the pyramids towered into the sky.



“Welcome to the realm of eternal sand,” the creature said, with a voice that sounded like the gentle rustle of dry grass. “I am Sandy, the Guardian of the Dunes. And I can see by your sparkle that you are not here for gold, but for the key to the Sun City.”

The little Fairy Queen took a step forward as the heat of the Egyptian sun warmed her weary limbs. “You are right, Sandy. We are looking for the clue to the fourth shard of my glass key. Pepe, the magic dwarf, told us that a ‘cat without a nose’ would be watching over it.”

Sandy laughed softly, her golden hat wobbling precariously. “Pepe has a loose tongue but a good heart. He means the Great Sphinx. She rests far beyond the dunes. But we must hurry, for a fierce desert storm is brewing.”

Indeed, the horizon suddenly turned a threatening dark red. The wind picked up, lashing the first grains of sand against the Fairy Queen’s pale face.

“My hat!” Sandy cried out in fright, clutching her golden treasure with both

hands. "If the storm blows it away, I will lose my magic and crumble into simple sand! I cannot lead you to the Sphinx if I am scattered by the wind myself!"

The Lunulis looked at each other with determination. They knew the little Fairy Queen had to save her magic. "Don't worry, Sandy!" Neoli shouted over the howling wind. "We'll hold onto you!"

Lio, Nala, and Neoli formed a circle around the little sand-being. They clung to one another and held the heavy golden hat with their combined strength as the storm grew more violent.

When the tempest finally subsided and the swirling sand settled, they had to hurry more than ever to find the clue to the fourth key-piece. "Can you take us to the Sphinx?" the little Fairy Queen asked Sandy, completely exhausted.

Sandy smiled, and her golden hat flashed playfully. "Much more than that! I am the Guardian of the Dunes – with me, you travel faster than the wind." Suddenly, Sandy began to spin like a top around her own axis. She whirled faster and faster until the golden sand of Egypt rose up and grew into a magnificent, colorful whirlwind that shimmered in all the colors of the Orient. "Quick, jump in!" she called out over the rushing of the sand. The little Fairy Queen and the Lunulis didn't hesitate for a second and hopped right into the heart of the colorful cyclone.

What happened next was like a ride on a magic carpet. They sped along high above the clouds. Below them, Egypt unfolded like a living picture book: endless oases sparkling like green emeralds in a yellow sea, and caravans of camels leisurely making their way through the hot sand.

The little Fairy Queen was speechless. In the Sun City, she had often overheard the dreams of humans. Many had murmured longingly of the mysterious structures of the Pharaohs, but the reality was even more beautiful than any dream could have painted.

Finally, the sand-vortex sank gently down. Before them rose the three massive Pyramids of Giza, stretching their peaks proudly into the azure sky.



And exactly there, as an unshakeable guardian of eternity, the Sphinx was enthroned. She was majestic, mysterious, and truly gargantuan. Her stone face gazed wisely into the distance, and where a nose had once been, only smooth stone bore witness to the passing of ages.

“Look for anything unusual!” the little Fairy Queen requested. Together they began to search the massive paws and the imposing body of the Sphinx. It felt like an eternity before Nala suddenly twitched her ears in excitement. “Here!” she cried. “Tucked away right behind a fold in the stone!”

Indeed: there was a tiny, almost invisible crevice. It was so narrow that not even a Lunuli finger would have fit inside. The little Fairy Queen knew she couldn't get any further with her bare hands. With weary limbs but a steady gaze, she pulled her faithful wand from her pouch. The magic within her felt very faint now, but for this moment, it had to flare up brightly one more time. She traced the glowing, horizontal figure-eight in the hot desert air and spoke with a clear, bright voice:

“Permitte mihi propositum meum assequi!”

With a deep rumble that made the desert sand tremble beneath their feet, the slit in the stone widened. But the triumph lasted only a heartbeat. The little Fairy Queen felt the world blur before her eyes. The effort was too great; like a fading shooting star, she sank into the warm sand.

“Neoli... please,” she breathed with the last of her strength. “Get the clue. I can... no more.”

The little Lunuli did not hesitate for a second. With the agility of a weasel, he slipped into the crevice and brought forth an ancient, shimmering parchment. But hardly was the little Fairy Queen holding the document in her trembling hands when the air changed. Just a moment ago it had been peaceful and hot, but now the wind suddenly lashed across the pyramids with the force of an avalanche.

“Oh no!” the little Fairy Queen cried, horror reflected in her pale face. “That is no ordinary storm. That is the Sand Wizard!”

In the midst of the swirling grains, a towering, dark figure formed. His eyes glowed like embers in the dust. From the Sun City, the little Fairy Queen had often observed him – a greedy being who dwelt in the lonely deserts, waiting only to turn the world's beautiful dreams and wishes into dry dust.

With a shrill, malicious laugh, the wizard lunged down from the heart of the storm. “Hand over the clue!” his voice thundered, sounding like grinding millstones. “The knowledge of dreams belongs to me!”

Before the little Fairy Queen could react, she was caught by a massive whirlwind. Sand lashed against her delicate wings, and she was swept high into the dark wall of clouds along with the wizard. It was a desperate struggle. The little Fairy Queen clung to the clue as if it were her own life, while Lio, Nala, and Neoli down on the ground tried frantically to distract the wizard. They threw stones and kicked up dust to cloud the monster's vision.

But the little Fairy Queen was at the end of her strength. Her wand remained silent and cold in her pouch; she had not a single spark of magic left to defend herself. With a hard, magical blow that made her head spin, the Sand Wizard wrenched the parchment from her.

“Finally!” he triumphed, his laughter drowning out the howling of the storm. “Dominion over dreams is within my reach! Sleep well, little queen – it will have been your last beautiful dream!”

With one final, mocking look, he vanished into nothingness along with the sandstorm. All that remained was an oppressive silence and a completely exhausted Fairy Queen, staring stunned at her empty hands.

6. A Spark of Hope in the Desert Sands

The silence the Sand Wizard had left behind weighed more heavily on the friends than the heat of the Egyptian sun. The little Fairy Queen stared at her empty hands, and a lone tear left a small trail in the dust on her cheeks. A single missing piece was enough to cause the Rainbow Bridge to collapse forever. Without the clue, they were blind – and the dreams of humanity would sink into grey mist forever.

But in the midst of this hopelessness, she felt a small, fluffy paw on her hand.

“We are not giving up!” said Neoli, and his voice was so firm and determined that Lio and Nala immediately lifted their heads. “The wizard may have the paper, but we have each other! He thinks he has already won, but he doesn't know the courage of us moon-beings. We still have four days until the full moon – that is more than enough time for a miracle!”

Sandy, the Guardian of the Desert, stepped to her side. Her golden hat shone dimly in the pale light following the storm. “Neoli is right,” she agreed, even though her voice trembled slightly with worry. “The Sand Wizard is powerful and hides in the deepest dunes, but no shadow is so dark that light cannot find it.”

The little Fairy Queen tried to stand up, but her knees felt like soft wax. She was a queen without a realm, a fairy without the power of flight. Sandy noticed the fading glow in her sad eyes, and a knowing smile touched her sandy lips.

“Listen to me, little Queen,” Sandy began gently. “There is a place where the earth touches the sky. High up in the North, where the ice never melts, the Northern Lights dance. They are not just colorful lights – they are the purest form of magic our world possesses. I have heard that their power can make even the tiredest wings beat again.”

The little Fairy Queen looked up. “The Northern Lights? But we have to pursue the wizard...”

“You cannot hunt a thief in the dark if your own light has gone out,” Sandy explained wisely. “The Northern Lights will help you regain part of your magical power. They will recharge your heart, just as the morning sun and the Dream Machine would in your Sun City.”

The little Fairy Queen did not complain. Not a single word of regret crossed her lips. She thought of the people who might fall asleep sadly tonight, and that gave her a new, unexpected strength. She straightened her shoulders and squeezed Neoli's paw.

"You are right, Sandy," she said, a new radiance in her voice. "You all will fly North. And we will bring back the magic – and then the clue!"

"But how are we to reach the high North?" the little Fairy Queen asked then in a quiet, worried voice. She looked at her delicate wings, which were still heavy from the heat and desert dust, and weak from the battle. "The world is so infinitely large, and our time is slipping through our fingers like sand."

In her distress, she closed her eyes and thought hard of the wise Moonstone Seer. He had promised her that she would never be alone.

"Please, wise friend, show us a path," she whispered in her heart.

Hardly had the thought vanished when something incredible happened. High up in the shimmering desert sky appeared neither bird nor cloud, but a shimmering structure of pure, crystal-clear ice. It was a small iceberg, sailing through the hot air like a glass ship. Upon it sat a tiny, sparkling creature that looked as if it were made of frozen snowflakes and starlight.



"Whoops! Looks like I've spotted some prominent travelers!" cried the creature, with a voice that sounded like the clinking of icicles. "Are you looking for a ride? I am **Icy**, and I just happened to be in the area to spread a bit of winter freshness! However, I must move on immediately, as it is very hot here."

The little Fairy Queen and the Lunulis stared at Icy with their mouths wide open. Was this the Moonstone Seer's answer? The little Fairy Queen asked no questions – she felt deep within her that the magic of friendship found its own unique ways. Gratitude filled her heart and gave her a tentative smile.

“I'm afraid I cannot accompany you,” Sandy said wistfully. The Guardian of the Desert took a step back as a few grains of sand trickled from her arm. “In the cold of the North, my heart would freeze solid. I need the warmth and the sand to live.”

With heavy hearts, the friends said goodbye to their brave desert guide. “We will see each other again, Sandy! We promise!” they cried in unison as they nimbly climbed onto the floating iceberg.

Icy gave a cheerful signal, and with a cold breath that froze the hot desert sand for a moment, they shot away – away from the pyramids, straight into the endless expanse of the North.

The journey was like a flight through a dream. The air became clearer, purer, and soon so cold that the Lunulis huddled close to the little Fairy Queen. But then, the miracle happened. Above them, the sky began to burn – but not with fire, but with light.

Massive veils of emerald green, violet, and shimmering pink danced across the firmament. They swirled like silken ribbons in the wind and bathed the iceberg in an otherworldly glow. They were the Northern Lights.



As soon as the first colored rays touched the pale skin of the little Fairy Queen, something magical happened. It felt like placing a withered flower into fresh spring water.

The magical energy of the Northern Lights flowed into her, filling her veins with new life and making her dress radiate once more in the most magnificent colors of the Sun City. The leaden tiredness that had almost crushed her vanished like mist in the morning sun.

“I feel it!” the little Fairy Queen cried with excitement, her voice sounding as clear as a silver bell again. She jumped up and twirled around in the light of the dancing colors. “The strength has returned! I am well again, my friends! The Sand Wizard may have our clue, but he did not count on the power of the Northern Lights!”

“I feel it in every fiber of my wings – this time, I will defeat the Sand Wizard!” the little Queen announced, and in her eyes danced a rainbow-colored radiance so intense that the Lunulis held their breath in awe. She no longer seemed like the exhausted traveler from the desert; she stood there like a warrior of light who had just bathed in an ocean of starlight.

As she twirled beneath the flickering Aurora, she suddenly paused. Her gaze softened and seemed to look through time and space. She closed her eyes, and for the blink of an eye, everything went silent. In that moment, her spirit sent a message into the distance, to where the Moonstone Seer watched over the fate of the world.

“He is in India!” she suddenly cried, snapping her eyes wide open. “The Sand Wizard has fled with our clue to the Taj Mahal. He hopes to find the fourth key-shard there before we do!” The little Fairy Queen shook her head in wonder. “But... how do I know that? I’ve never even been there!”

Icy, the little ice-being, chuckled gleefully, and a few ice crystals fell from his shoulders like fine sugar. “Were you perhaps just thinking of the Moonstone Seer?” he asked with a knowing wink. “He whispers the truth to those who have a pure heart. He has watched over us all forever – he is the beginning and the end of every story.”

The Lunulis exchanged meaningful glances. They knew that the little Fairy Queen had forgotten much due to her hard fall onto the moon – her origins, her true power over dreams and wishes, and the ancient legends of her home. But they felt that the memories were returning piece by piece, like

stars appearing one by one in the evening sky. “Now there isn’t a second to lose to find the next shard!” Neoli cried, full of drive, and the friends joined him in agreement.

7. The Journey in the Glass Comet!

The journey was an exhilarating ride across the world. Beneath them, the glittering Arctic transformed into endless coniferous forests, where wolves howled at the moon and reindeer trudged through the deep snow. Then the air grew warmer, the colors more vibrant, and the scents more spicy. They flew over deep, misty valleys and noisy markets that glowed like colorful mosaics below. Deep in the jungles of India, they saw majestic elephants at watering holes and monkeys looking up curiously at their icy vessel.

“Whoops, we need to pick up the pace!” Icy suddenly cried, wiping a few drops of water from his forehead. “This Indian summer is no place for a creature of frost. My beautiful iceberg is melting away beneath my feet!”

But no one let their head hang. Saving the dreams was a goal stronger than the heat of the sun. And then, as the horizon was bathed in a delicate pink, it appeared before them: the Taj Mahal.



It sat there like a petrified dream made of white marble, surrounded by mirror-smooth pools and magnificent gardens. Its domes shimmered in the light of the setting sun like giant, perfect pearls. The friends held their breath – they had seen much beauty, but this splendor surpassed it all. Yet, amidst this beauty, a dark feeling stirred: somewhere within this marble palace lurked the Sand Wizard, who knew exactly where the shard was to be found. Then, the friends saw it.

At the very top, on the uttermost peak of the great dome, it rested: the fourth piece of the Glass Key sparkled in the last light of the day like a captive diamond.

"There it is!" cried the little Fairy Queen, and her heart gave a leap of joy. But suddenly, the air grew heavy and dry. A malicious laugh tore through the silence, and a massive swirl of sand lashed against the white marble. The Sand Wizard was back! He raced like a dark arrow toward the roof's peak, greedy to bury the shard under an impenetrable shield of black magic.

"Quick! We must not let him have his way!" cried the little Fairy Queen. Icy gave everything he had, steering the iceberg – which by now was only a small, melting snowball – directly against the flank of the Taj Mahal.

A wild battle broke out on the slippery roof. While the little Fairy Queen and the wizard let the sparks of their magic fly, the Lunulis realized that merely darting around wouldn't get them far this time. The wizard was too angry, too dogged.

Then, a brilliant idea flashed in Neoli's eyes. "Jump onto my shoulders!" he commanded. Lio and Nala understood instantly. One after another, they climbed up nimbly until they stood like a living tower on the roof. Suddenly, they towered high above the Sand Wizard. The silhouette of the three friends was so huge and terrifying that the wizard paused mid-spell and nearly lost his balance from the shock. He hadn't expected something so gigantic from the little moon-beings!

Furious at his own fear, the wizard thrust his staff high. He intended to hit the little Fairy Queen with a powerful curse, but she was faster. The power of the Northern Lights still pulsed through her veins. She traced the horizontal figure-eight in the sky – the sign whose origin she had forgotten, but whose power she felt like a familiar pulse.

"Ego sum lux mundi!" she cried, and her voice sounded like a thunderclap of pure light.

In that moment, the little Fairy Queen practically exploded into a sea of colors. She shone so brightly and magnificently as if she had become a small sun herself. The Sand Wizard, whose eyes were only accustomed to the murky light of desert storms, let out a scream. He was so blinded that he lost his footing, stumbled, and with a pathetic hiss, fell from the roof of the Taj Mahal.

Quick as a flash, the little Fairy Queen grabbed the fourth key-piece and secured it in her pouch. When she and the Lunulis climbed down from the roof a little later, they found the wizard on the ground. He staggered about dizzily, clutching his head, but his malice remained unbroken.

"Don't you think for a moment that you've won!" he shrieked, waving a threatening fist. "I know where the fifth piece is hidden! It lies at the Great Wall of China! I shall get it there before you even take your next breath!"

He tried to conjure a new sandstorm, but he was too dazed. His magic only flickered weakly. Grumbling like a common scold, he hurled a magic ball onto the ground. With a loud *poof*, he vanished in a purple cloud of smoke.

Exhausted but happy, the friends sank into the grass before the Taj Mahal. Four pieces were safe – only three were missing! Victory felt sweet, but the little Fairy Queen knew the wizard had made a fatal mistake this time.

"Well," she smiled, wiping a bit of marble dust from her cheek, "he really isn't the cleverest, is he, simply telling us his destination."

Still, the strain showed on her. The energy of the Northern Lights was powerful, but it couldn't quite replace the true light of the Sun City. Time was pressing more than ever.

"We must go to China at once," Neoli said determinedly, pointing to a fine, glittering trail the wizard had left in the air during his escape. "We'll just follow the magic trail he forgot in his haste. It will lead us straight to the Great Wall!"

The little Fairy Queen's eyes lit up. "Neoli, that's a brilliant idea!" she cried, and for a moment, the rainbow-colored sparkle returned to her face. But as she looked around to call their icy pilot to depart, she faltered. "But... wait a moment. Where is Icy? And what happened to our iceberg?"

The friends looked around, confused. Where just a moment ago a snowball-sized throne of glittering frost had lay, only damp marble was to be seen. No iceberg, no little winter spirit – far and wide, there was only the oppressive, spicy heat of the Indian evening.

Suddenly, a fine, bright little voice reached them. It sounded a bit like dropping a tiny pebble into a glass of water. "Down here! I'm here, in the puddle with the happy water drops!"

Startled, the little Fairy Queen bent low over a small, shimmering pool of

water that had formed between the white stone slabs. And indeed: there, in the middle of the cool wetness, a few especially bright bubbles were dancing. "Oh, goodness gracious, Icy!" the little Fairy Queen cried, quite taken aback. "What on earth happened to you? You're... you're entirely liquid!"

"Well," Icy chuckled from the puddle, sounding like a cheerful brook leaping over pebbles, "my faithful iceberg and I have melted, in case you hadn't noticed amidst all the fuss. Here in India, it's just a bit too cozy for a being made of snowflakes!" He puffed out a little squirt of water that looked like a wink. "And as you know: when ice gets warm, it turns to water."

The Lunulis looked sadly at the puddle, but Icy was just bubbling with good humor. "Don't worry about me! I'm used to this from my summer holidays. I'll just stay here and enjoy the sun until it gets really hot. Then I'll turn into invisible steam, and the clouds will carry me around the whole world again like a silvery sailing ship. Perhaps one day I'll rain down on your noses as a hailstone again!"

With one last, gurgling laugh, Icy merged completely with the water. The puddle reflected the evening glow of the Taj Mahal one last time, and then it went still. A faithful companion had now become part of the wide world.

The little Fairy Queen stood up and looked in the direction where the Sand Wizard's magic trail was pointing. The warmth of India lay heavy on her wings, but the thought of the Great Wall of China awakened her fighting spirit.

"Farewell, Icy, and thank you for everything!" she whispered. Then she turned to Neoli, Lio, and Nala. "We have no time to lose. The wizard is ahead of us, and the magic trail won't last forever. If we want to reach the Great Wall, we must hurry."



From the glistening core, a delicate, almost sugary-sweet being finally stepped forth. “I have heard the call of your hearts,” it said, with a voice that sounded like the ringing of fine crystal glasses. “They call me the Sky-Swift. The Moonstone Seer has sent me from the orbits of the Milky Way. He said your mission is too important to let time slip away in vain.”

“Could you take us to the Great Wall of China?” the little Fairy Queen asked the Sky-Swift, new hope mingling in her voice.

The Sky-Swift smiled so brightly that the shadows of the palm trees vanished for a moment. “Nothing easier than that! My glass comet is faster than thought and surer than any path made of stone. Step inside; we have an appointment with the dawn!”

The Lunulis and the little Fairy Queen curiously climbed into the glittering sphere, which felt as soft and warm from the inside as sunbeams on the skin. The Sky-Swift simply snapped his fingers once – *Ping!* – and already they shot up into the night sky like a falling star.

Beneath them, the world raced by like a colorful ribbon. They crossed foaming oceans and glittering skyscrapers that rose from the ground like needles. The little Fairy Queen pressed her nose against the glowing glass wall of the comet. Deep below, she saw mighty bears in the forests, proud peacocks fanning their tails, and leopards chasing through the grass like golden lightning. “This is fantastic!” she cried enthusiastically. “Seeing animals in the wild is the most beautiful gift. They are simply happy – just as the dreams of humans should be.”

Before they knew it, the landscape beneath them changed once more. A massive ribbon of stone wound like a sleeping dragon over the green ridges and valleys, as far as the eye could see. The Sky-Swift steered his vessel down in a gentle arc and set them down right at the foot of the **Great Wall**.



“Good luck on your adventure! May the light guide you!” the little messenger called out to them one last time, before racing back to the stars in a sparkling trail.

There they stood – tiny figures in the shadow of one of the largest structures in the world. The wall stretched to the horizon and seemed to have no end. “Where do we even begin?” the little Fairy Queen asked, looking up at the massive stone steps. “This wall has a thousand stones and ten thousand hiding places.”

Suddenly, they heard a soft, silvery giggle. From a dense bamboo forest right next to the path, two deep black, curious eyes peered out. A small, round-as-a-ball panda watched them while chewing, appearing as if he were just waiting to be spoken to.

“Hello!” came a voice that sounded as cozy as a warm pillow. The little panda waddled out from the shadows of the bamboo stalks and adjusted a green leaf. “You look as if you’ve gotten a bit lost among all these stones. Perhaps I can lend you a paw?”

The little Fairy Queen and the Lunulis blinked in surprise. “You want to help us?” the Fairy Queen asked, as hope rose within her like a tiny spark. She hastily told him of their long journey, the theft, and the fifth shard hidden somewhere in this stone labyrinth.

The panda nodded so eagerly that his round ears wobbled. “I knew you would come. The Moonstone Seer whispered to me in a dream that I had to interrupt my bamboo break today,” he explained with a mischievous smile. “I’ve known every stone of this wall since I was a little tyke. But you must know: the Sand Wizard is already here. And he is no longer alone.”

The friends held their breath. “No longer alone?” Lio repeated with a trembling voice.

“He found an ally on his way,” the panda whispered, his expression suddenly becoming very grave. “Someone much larger and more powerful than himself.”

“Who could that be?” the little Fairy Queen asked, an eerie shiver crawling up her spine.

“A dragon,” the panda breathed in awe. “A creature of ancient legends, possessing power over raging storms and scorching fire. He has allied himself with the Sand Wizard. Together, they intend to use the Dream Machine of the Sun City for their dark purposes. If you don’t make it back in time, the dreams of humanity will turn to ash and smoke.”

For a moment, the little Fairy Queen froze. The terrible image of a world without dreams hit her like a blow. The walls around her seemed to grow narrower, and the weight of responsibility pressed heavily on her heart. But then she felt a firm nudge on her hand.

“Go! We have no time for playing statues!” Neoli cried bravely. “We are a team, and no dragon in the world is stronger than our friendship!”

The little Fairy Queen’s paralysis dissolved. With the panda leading the way, they plunged into the adventure. They crossed dense, emerald-green forests and followed secret paths so narrow they seemed to run right inside the massive wall. Finally, they reached a heavy gate decorated with dragon motifs.

“Here it is,” the panda whispered excitedly. “A temple forgotten by time. Here rests the fifth piece of your glass key!”

But as they entered the sacred halls, a scene of horror met their eyes. The room was filled with the smell of sulfur and dry desert sand. There, at the Altar of Light, a massive, scaled figure towered. The dragon, whose eyes glowed like liquid gold, tilted its head while the Sand Wizard reached with greedy fingers for the sparkling glass shard hovering above an altar. They were only a heartbeat away from adding the next piece to their power.

“You scoundrels!” the little Fairy Queen shouted, her voice echoing like thunder through the ancient temple walls. The time for gentleness was over. A storm of light and shadow ignited in the heart of the Great Wall.

The Lunulis were everywhere at once – like fluffy will-o'-the-wisps, they swirled around the dragon's massive body and the wizard's fluttering robes. They pulled here, pinched there, and thoroughly threw the wizard's dark incantations into disarray. But the dragon was a beast of primeval fire; with every breath, he spat glowing cascades down upon the little Fairy Queen, while the wizard, like a mad juggler, hurled one fireball after another.

The little Queen felt the heat singeing her wings. Her strength, which she had recharged at the North Pole, was waning under the incessant hail of attacks. But in the darkest second, she closed her eyes and called the cold, clear image of the Northern Lights into her mind.

She thrust her wand upward, traced the glowing figure-eight in the smoky air, and cried with a strength that came from the depths of her soul: “***Pax hic in aeternum redeat!***”

A massive pulse of light raced through the temple. Where chaos and fire had just reigned, radiant bars of pure light now shot out of the ground. With a metallic clang, they closed around the dragon and the wizard. The beast and its master were trapped!

Hastily, the little Fairy Queen reached for the fifth key-shard, which now slid peacefully into her pouch. She stepped close to the bars and glared at the Sand Wizard. “Now I’ve really had quite enough of you! Go find another hobby instead of constantly annoying me!”

The wizard, whose hat sat completely crooked, slumped down. He was so exhausted from the light-spell that he only babbled incoherent words: “Red mountain... island... kangaroos... Australia... there lies the trail...”, he muttered, before he and the dragon fell into a deep, magical sleep.

“Goodness, the Sand Wizard is actually quite helpful, whether he likes it or not,” Neoli giggled, wiping the soot from his nose. “You just have to lock him up tight enough!”

But worry quickly returned. Only two days left! Two days for two pieces, one of which lay somewhere on a distant island called Australia. How were they supposed to know which red mountain was meant?

“Don’t you worry!” a voice suddenly chirped from a crevice in the wall. A tiny, nimble sprite named Twinkie hopped out.



He held a gemstone in his hand that shone so brightly it illuminated the entire temple. “I am Twinkie, the Guardian of the Wall. The mountain you seek is the sacred Uluru! It is the glowing heart of the Red Continent.”

Before the friends could even ask how they were supposed to cross the ocean, Twinkie held his gemstone high. The light expanded, tearing open the fabric of space and forming a swirling, golden gate. “Jump! Time does not sleep!” the sprite called out in farewell.

With a brave leap, the little Fairy Queen and the Lunulis jumped through the portal. For a moment, it felt as if they were swimming through liquid gold, and then they felt solid ground beneath their feet once more.

The air was dry and smelled of adventure. There, towering before them, it stood: Uluru.



A colossal red ridge of rock that, in the evening sun, was not merely red – it glowed as if someone had poured the very fire of the sun directly into the stone. It was a sight of such raw, magical beauty that the little Fairy Queen forgot her exhaustion for a moment. They had reached their destination, but somewhere within this red giant, the sixth piece of the key was waiting.

“Wow!” the little Fairy Queen breathed, her voice sounding tiny against the massive backdrop of Uluru. “This is even more impressive than I ever dared to dream! From above, from the cloud-castles of the Sun City, it always looked like a small, smooth pebble in the red sand.” She reverently stroked the warm rock, which held onto the day’s heat like a faithful reservoir.

But time was a relentless hunter. “We must not dream away the moment,” she warned the Lunulis. “The clue to the sixth piece must be hidden here somewhere.” Together, they began the long march around the massive base of the mountain. Hour after hour passed; the shadows grew longer, and the red of the stone transformed into a deep, glowing violet. Yet, no matter how hard they searched, Uluru seemed to keep its secrets tightly locked away.

Just as hope threatened to fade like the last light of day, it happened. At the very moment the sun kissed the horizon, the angle of the rays shifted. Suddenly, a narrow crevice lit up at the foot of the mountain—one that had been completely invisible in the harsh midday light. It was as if the rock were opening a golden eye.

“There! That must be the entrance!” Neoli cried, pointing to the gentle

shimmer.

Bravely, they entered the cave. The passage led them deep into the cool heart of the mountain until they reached a hidden chamber. In its center sat a massive block of stone, its surface engraved with masterful precision with a map of the world. A single, ruby-red glowing dot marked a location surrounded by rugged mountains and vast deserts.

“That’s it!” the little Fairy Queen cried, her exhaustion swept away. “The sixth piece of the Glass Key is waiting for us in the hidden rock city of **Petra!**” But hardly had the joy been spoken when worry returned. “But Petra is in Jordan... how are we to cross this vast distance over the great sea in such a short time?”

In her distress, the little Fairy Queen’s thoughts wandered back to the hot sands of Egypt. She thought of the faithful guardian with the golden hat who had led them so safely through the dunes. “Oh, Sandy, if only you could hear us now,” she wished silently.

Suddenly, the sand on the cave floor began to dance. A warm laugh, sounding like a thousand tiny pebbles, filled the room. “Here I am! Did you really think I would leave you alone during this final sprint?”

It was Sandy! She was beaming, as if she had soaked up the very power of the desert. “I felt your calling in the wind currents. In the blink of an eye, I traveled through the underground sand-veins of the world to stand by you.” She adjusted her hat and winked at the Lunulis. “Jordan is like a second home to me. Hold on tight, my friends – we’re taking the shortcut through the breath of the desert!”

With a swift wave of her hand, Sandy conjured a massive whirlwind. It enveloped the companions in a shimmering cocoon of gold dust. For a moment, it felt as if they were becoming one with the wind; then, they dissolved into a glittering vortex, leaving the red giant of Australia behind.

8. Can We Truly Make It?

The flight within the sand-vortex was like a ride on a golden comet. Beneath them, endless oceans, snow-capped peaks, and vast deserts blurred into a single ribbon of color. When the swirling dust finally settled and the air grew still once more, the friends could hardly believe their eyes.



They found themselves in the midst of a landscape that looked as if a giant had carved it out of liquid sunset. Towering, deep-red rock faces rose like stone masterpieces into the azure sky. Narrow, mysterious canyons cut through the rock like razor-sharp paths. They had reached their destination: the legendary rock city of Petra.

"Incredible!" Neoli marveled, reverently stroking the cool, smooth stone with his little paws. "That human hands could create something so perfect... and that it has endured for all these millennia!" Lio and Nala also gazed up in admiration at the magnificent facades carved directly out of the living rock.

Under Sandy's expert guidance, they delved deep into the city's labyrinth. The Guardian of the Desert knew every hidden passage and winding tunnel as if they were her own pockets. They glided past majestic temples and awe-inspiring tombs, their columns shimmering in the soft light of the Jordanian sun. The silence of the ancient stones told them stories of kings and caravans from long-forgotten times.

"Somewhere here, among these history-steeped walls, the sixth piece must be pulsing," the little Fairy Queen said with a firm voice. Her courage had returned, even though she felt time working relentlessly against them. Yet, as

much as they peered into every niche and peeked behind every column—the shard remained hidden.

Only after what felt like an eternity did Lio suddenly pause. "Look! There's something on the wall!" he cried excitedly.

Hidden under a layer of desert dust, they discovered an ancient inscription carved deep into the soft sandstone. With a racing heart, the little Fairy Queen read the words aloud:

"Within the halls of this temple rests a treasure that shines brighter than the desert sun."

A knowing smile touched her lips. "If there's practically a signpost hanging here for us, then we are closer to our goal than we thought," she said hopefully. Inside, she already felt the familiar, faint vibration of magic. The sixth piece of the Glass Key was just waiting to be awakened from its slumber.

Finally, in an inconspicuous, almost humble niche in the rough sandstone, rested the sixth piece of the Glass Key, sparkling as pure and clear as if it were made of frozen starlight.

But just as the little Fairy Queen reached out her hand to retrieve the precious piece, an ominous howling tore through the air. Dust swirled up, and a figure raced toward them with the speed of a desert storm.

"This simply cannot be true!" the little Fairy Queen cried in disbelief, squinting her eyes. "Has the Sand Wizard actually sent his own offspring to complete his dark work? Truly, nothing is sacred to him anymore!"

It was a boy, hardly older than the dreamers the little Fairy Queen loved so dearly, yet dressed in the sandy robes of his father. With grim determination in his eyes, this sorcerer's apprentice rushed toward them, driven by the ambition to lay the sixth key-piece at his master's feet.

Without warning, the boy hurled a massive ball of compressed sand at the little Queen. The Lunulis shot between them like fluffy lightning to intercept the attack, but the force was too great. The ball burst with the strength of a small explosion, and the little Fairy Queen could only dodge with a risky leap, nearly losing her footing on the ancient floor.

A malicious, youthful laugh echoed off the rock walls. "You are finished, little

Fairy Queen! The light belongs to my father – and to me!" he shouted, swinging his staff. Suddenly, a gust of wind whipped through the canyon, so violent that it swept the Lunulis off their feet like dry leaves. Lio, Nala, and Neoli whirled helplessly through the air, desperately trying to cling to one another, but the magical suction was relentless.

The little Fairy Queen tried frantically to bundle her remaining power, but the gift of the Northern Lights was almost exhausted. She felt empty and heavy. The apprentice recognized her weakness and fired a glistening bolt of pure sand at her. The impact was so fierce that she was thrown to the ground.

A murmur of horror went through the little moon-beings, but they knew their Queen poorly. Despite the pain and the leaden fatigue, she pulled herself up. With trembling hands, she smoothed her torn skirt and gripped her wand with new, burning courage. She swayed, but she stood.

The apprentice now let gigantic waves of sand rise, ready to bury her once and for all beneath a dune. Then, a saving idea flashed in Neoli's eyes. "A mirror! Conjure a mirror!" he shouted to the little Fairy Queen over the roaring of the storm.

She understood instantly. With the last of her strength, she traced the glowing figure-eight into the swirling air. It was not an attack; it was a return to justice. With a voice that sounded like crystal despite her exhaustion, she called out to the boy:

"Ut sementem feceris, ita metes!"

Hardly had the words of the incantation faded when a massive, shimmering barrier of purest light materialized out of thin air. Like a wall of liquid silver, the mirror stood before the stunned apprentice. All the malice he had unleashed – the roaring sand-waves, the crashing sand-bolts, and the hard spheres of dust – bounced off the smooth surface with double the force.

True to the motto "As you call into the forest, so it echoes out," the boy was caught by his own dark magic. With an incredulous cry, he was swept off his feet and landed unsmoothly on the ground, defeated by his own recklessness.

The little Fairy Queen was at the end of her strength; her breath came in gasps, and her heart beat like a small, trapped bird. Yet the determination within her burned brighter than ever. She seized the precious seconds of confusion, hurried to the niche, and clasped the sixth fragment of the Glass Key with trembling fingers.

The apprentice scrambled up dizzily. "You'll regret this!" he shrieked, shaking the sand from his clothes. "I'll be back! And I certainly won't tell you that the clue to the seventh and final piece is waiting for you on **Mount Everest**, the highest peak in the world! Never!"

With this involuntary confession, which had spilled out of him in sheer rage, he enveloped himself in a dark cloud of dust and vanished as quickly as he had come.

"We have it!" cheered the little Fairy Queen with a weak but proud voice, showing the Lunulis the sixth shard. Then she had to sit down for a moment and close her eyes. The battle had almost completely drained her magical battery.

"But how on earth are we supposed to climb the highest mountain in the world?" Neoli asked after a while, worriedly nibbling on his paws. "That's Mount Everest! It's ice-cold up there, and the way is endless."

The little Fairy Queen rubbed her forehead. Once again, she sent a silent plea for help to the wise Moonstone Seer. And as if by a miracle, the world answered immediately: from the deep shadows of the rock walls, a giant, white, and incredibly fluffy figure emerged.



It was a Yeti! But he didn't look the least bit frightening. He had large, faithful googly eyes, massive paws, and – most peculiar of all – a funny bobble hat sitting crookedly on his head.

“Hello everyone!” the Yeti called out in a voice that sounded like a soft rumble. “I couldn't help but overhear. You need a lift to Mount Everest in Nepal, right?” He smiled so sweetly that one practically wanted to sink right into his fur.

The little Fairy Queen was enchanted. “You really are a Yeti! And what a delightful fellow you are!” she exclaimed. The Yeti nodded proudly. “I live up there on Mount Everest and know every crevice and every snowdrift. I was only visiting a few friends here in Petra – the warm sand does my limbs good. But now, it's time to head home!”

Gratefully, the little Fairy Queen and the Lunulis climbed onto the broad, cotton-soft shoulders of their new friend. After a warm goodbye to Sandy, they were off.

And oh, how they went!

The Yeti didn't just run – he seemed to fly across continents. He stormed through the Jordanian desert, crossed snow-capped passes, and strode through deep, misty valleys at a pace that took the friends' breath away. The wind whistled past their ears, and the clouds flitted by beneath them like white flocks of sheep.

“This is better than any roller coaster at the fairground!” Lio, Nala, and Neoli shrieked with delight. After a journey that felt like a wild dream, it finally towered before them: Mount Everest.



A gigantic white titan, whose peak seemed to touch the stars. The Lunulis

stared up in awe – they had arrived at the roof of the world, the place where their destiny would be decided.

“Up there, where the heavens kiss the earth, lies your goal,” the Yeti’s voice boomed, as he pointed to a tiny opening at the summit of Mount Everest, danced upon by icy winds. “Within that cave sleeps the final clue. But beware: the shadows up here are cold and hungry. The power of the seventh piece attracts those who wish to plunge the world into eternal darkness.”

With a deep, grateful look, the little Fairy Queen bid farewell to her fluffy mountain guide. Together with the Lunulis, she began the final, most arduous ascent. The snow beneath their feet glittered like millions of polished diamonds, but the cold was relentless. It cut through her delicate robes like knives.

When her knees finally gave way and exhaustion threatened to press her to the ground, Lio, Nala, and Neoli were instantly by her side. They took their Queen into their midst, supporting her with their small, warm bodies, forming a chain of courage and solidarity. “Just one more piece,” they whispered to her. “The Sun City is waiting for us!”

Behind a narrow crevice, the heart of the mountain finally opened. The cave was a cathedral of black ice, as dark as the interior of a thundercloud. But suddenly, a sparkling ray tore through the gloom.

“I see it!” cried the little Fairy Queen, and a final remnant of energy flooded her body. Deep within the cave rested the clue, but it was not easily reached: it was encased in the center of a gigantic, massive block of ice that stood in the room like a petrified teardrop.

But hardly had she placed her fingertips upon the smooth, frozen surface when the blood froze in her veins. From the shadow of a massive icicle, two figures emerged. It was the sorcerer’s apprentice, whose eyes burned with rage and ambition – and at his side growled a towering white beast: a polar bear with eyes as blue as glacial crevasses.

“Did you really think you’d be alone up here?” the boy shouted, his voice echoing cruelly off the walls. With a commanding gesture, he placed a glowing, magical ward around the ice block. “This time, my father will be proud of me! The clue belongs to us!”

The little Fairy Queen froze. She had believed the boy could only command the magic of the sand, but here, at the roof of the world, he seemed to use the cold itself as a weapon. With a wicked grin, he unleashed a blizzard within the cave. Razor-sharp ice crystals whirled around the friends, threatening to strike them blind.

The little Fairy Queen fought desperately. She tried to gather her inner light, but the ascent and the previous battles had drained her. Every attempt at a spell felt like trying to light a fire in pouring rain.

The apprentice, however, grew stronger and stronger, fed by the hateful will to finally defeat the little Fairy Queen. The darkness of the cave seemed to settle over their hope like a heavy blanket.

The apprentice tore his arms skyward and whispered words as old and cold as the ice of Mount Everest itself. An eerie, azure glow enveloped him, and from his staff shot a beam of pure frost that seemed to want to freeze time itself. The little Fairy Queen braced herself desperately against it, but the remaining flicker of the Northern Lights within her was now only a faint wick – just like herself.

In this moment of weakness, the polar bear sensed its chance. With a low rumble, the white beast rose and swiped a paw at the little Queen – a paw large enough to shatter a boulder. But the little Fairy Queen activated her last reserves. With an elegant, almost weightless leap, she dodged the blow. The bear, driven by its own momentum, lost its footing on the mirror-smooth floor and slid with a bewildered yowl down into the dark depths of the icy chasm.

The little Fairy Queen allowed herself only a single, deep breath. But the apprentice knew no mercy. His eyes glowed with rage, and his voice thundered through the cave like breaking ice as he wove a new curse. Suddenly, razor-sharp icicles, meters high, shot up from the ground. Like the bars of a frosty dungeon, they enclosed the little Fairy Queen, leaving her no room to breathe.

In the cramped confines of this prison, she closed her eyes. She gathered not only her magic but also all her memories of the light of the Sun City. She raised her wand, tracing the glowing figure-eight into the darkness with her last, trembling strength, and cried out against the shadow:

“Nunc liber sum et in aeternum ero!”

A glistening beam of purest light erupted from her wand. It struck the apprentice directly at his legs with the force of a rising sun, sweeping him off his feet. The light was so powerful that the ice prison shattered into a thousand glittering shards – and even the gigantic ice block enclosing the clue melted away into warm water within seconds.

But the boy did not give up. He scrambled up, his face contorted into a

malicious grimace. “You may have defeated the cold, little fairy, but my darkest trump card is yet to come!” he shrieked. With his hands, he formed a tear in the fabric of the world – a black portal from which silent, gaunt shadows crawled. They stretched their cold fingers toward the little Fairy Queen to suck the light from her soul.

In the midst of this darkness, a miracle occurred. Suddenly, the little Fairy Queen was enveloped not by cold, but by an indescribable warmth. A golden radiance, fed by the courage of the Lunulis and the faith of the people on Earth, surrounded her like a protective cocoon. With every shadow she touched with her light, she felt stronger, until she finally raised her wand once more:

“Lūx et virtūs semper mecum sint!”

With one blow, the shadows were banished back into the void. The cave radiated in pure white once again. But the apprentice only laughed shrilly. “Do you really triumph?” he mocked. “Look at you! You may have fought, but the clue to the final piece has melted with the ice! You will never complete the key. Soon the world will sink into chaos, and darkness will win over dreams!” With this cruel laughter, he wrapped himself in a cloud of black dust and vanished, leaving the friends behind in the silent, dripping ice cave.

An icy terror, colder than the frost of Mount Everest, settled upon the heart of the little Fairy Queen. She stared at the puddle at her feet, where the melted ice of the block was slowly seeping away. The apprentice had been right: the clue was gone, washed away into the bottomless depths of the cave.

“Time... it is slipping through our fingers,” she whispered, her voice trembling like a dying flame. “Tonight is already the full moon. If the silver glow touches the summit and the Rainbow Bridge is not completed, the gate to the Sun City will remain closed forever.”

The thought of the world's dreams crumbling into grey shadows almost took her breath away. But then she straightened her shoulders. A royal spark flickered in her gaze. “No! We do not surrender to the darkness. Not now, not so close to the goal!” she cried to the Lunulis, who huddled close to her.

“But where should we search?” Neoli asked, his little ears twitching with drive. “The world is so infinitely wide, and we no longer have a compass.”

The little Fairy Queen closed her eyes and let her thoughts fly like nimble swallows across the continents. “Think, my friends,” she murmured. “We have

followed an ancient trail. We have been to the most magnificent places human hands have ever created. Six wonders have already entrusted us with their treasures.”

With a solemn voice, she began to list them, while she could almost feel the sparkling shards in her pouch:

1. **The Colosseum** in Rome, where it all began.
2. **The Christ the Redeemer statue** in Brazil, high above the clouds.
3. **The Kukulcan Pyramid of Chichén Itzá** in Mexico.
4. **The snow-white Taj Mahal** in the heart of India.
5. **The Great Wall** in China, winding like a dragon.
6. **The rock city of Petra** in Jordan.

Suddenly, her eyes flew wide open. A radiance brighter than any Northern Light was reflected in her pupils. It was as if the Moonstone Seer himself had pushed aside a curtain in her memory.

“Of course!” she exclaimed, and a liberated laugh rang through the dark ice cave. “How could we have overlooked it? The chain is not yet complete! There is a seventh place, one last wonder that has been waiting for us in the jungles of Peru for a long time!”

A golden light enveloped the little Fairy Queen as the missing puzzle piece clicked into place in her mind. She knew exactly where the journey had to go now.

“Have you actually noticed that we have traveled through the very soul of the world?” she asked, and a knowing smile chased the paleness from her face. “Every place was a wonder in itself. And the seventh piece – the final jewel of my key – waits where the heavens hold the earth in their arms. We must go back to Peru, to Machu Picchu!”

“Peru?” Neoli breathed, looking worriedly at the moon, which was already lurking impatiently behind the peaks. “That’s a giant leap across the ocean! How are we supposed to manage that before the full moon reaches its highest point?” He nudged the little Fairy Queen gently, for he knew: only her faith could move mountains now.

The little Fairy Queen straightened her shoulders, her eyes flashing with determination. “We need someone who is faster than the wind and freer than a thought. We need Pegasus!”

The Lunulis held their breath. “Pegasus?” Neoli asked in awe. “Is that a being made of light?”

“Much more beautiful,” the little Queen explained, her cheeks glowing. “A horse with wings made of clouds and silk. He is the guardian of dreams and the fastest traveler between worlds.”

Hardly had the name been spoken when the impossible happened: the lashing blizzard of Mount Everest parted like a curtain. From a radiant rift in the sky, a magnificent steed galloped down. His wings were so vast that their beat made the ice ring out, and his coat shimmered like freshly fallen starlight.



“I have heard your calling in the wind currents, little Queen,” Pegasus neighed, and his voice sounded like a golden harp. “Time is pressing, and the Rainbow Bridge does not wait. Mount up, you heroes of the night!”

8. The Ride Across Infinity

Gratefully, the friends climbed onto the velvet-soft back of the noble creature. With a single, powerful beat of his wings, Pegasus took flight. It was no ordinary flight; it felt as if they were riding upon beams of light.

Beneath them, the world unfolded like a living atlas. They shot over the icy crags of the Himalayas, left the turquoise expanses of the oceans behind, and dove deep into the emerald sea of the rainforests.

“Look!” Neoli cried enthusiastically, pointing down to where a shimmering lake lay like a sapphire in the jungle. “Down there, pink flamingos are dancing!”

Pegasus let out a gentle, neighing laugh. “Keep your hearts wide open, little friends! The world is full of wonders just waiting to be seen by you.”

The journey was a rush of colors and scents, until finally, the humid warmth of Central America kissed their faces. In the soft light of the approaching full moon night, Pegasus descended majestically. Gently, he set them down on a hill from which they could overlook their final great destination. There, amidst the dense, mysterious green, rose the mighty stepped structures of Machu Picchu. It stood there like a stone guardian of time, ready to entrust the friends with the final secret.



“Our search ends here,” the little Fairy Queen whispered, her voice trembling with awe and hope. The majestic ruins of Machu Picchu lay before them, nestled into the misty peaks of the Andes like a forgotten jewel. But time was a relentless adversary – the horizon was already turning a deep violet, and the approaching silver of the full moon could already be felt as a soft shimmer in the sky.

The little Fairy Queen knew that her eyes alone were no longer enough. She closed her lids, breathed the cool mountain air deeply, and let her spirit wander. In a vision that shone brighter than the sun itself, she saw the ancient walls pulsing in the colors of the rainbow. Deep in the heart of a temple ruin, hidden behind a stone as old as the world itself, she saw it: the seventh piece. It was calling to her.

“There! Behind the great stone in the Temple of Light!” she cried, snapping her eyes open and charging forward, followed by the nimble Lunulis.

With combined forces, they pushed aside the heavy, moss-covered stone. And there it lay – the seventh fragment, so clear and pure that it seemed to capture the starlight itself. At that exact moment, the full moon slid over the mountain peaks in all its glory, bathing the ruins in a sea of liquid silver.

“Please...” the little Fairy Queen breathed, sending a desperate prayer up to the Moonstone Seer, whose kind presence she felt more clearly than ever. With trembling hands, she took all seven pieces from her pouch and held them high toward the firmament.

The moment the first ray of pure moonlight touched the glass shards, the unthinkable happened: a singing tone filled the air, and the fragments began to merge together. A massive bolt of light shot up from the hands of the little Fairy Queen, tearing the darkness in two and forming a radiant, colorful path that stretched into infinity.



“Run!” she cried, and together with the Lunulis, she stormed up the glowing steps. Beneath their feet, the light felt as solid as crystal. With every step, they left the worries of the Earth behind until they reached the gates of the Sun City.

“I am home...” the little Fairy Queen whispered, tears of joy in her eyes. But hardly had the words faded when all color drained from her face. The exertions of the world tour, the battles against the Sand Wizard, and all the other magical duels took their toll. Like a broken flower, the little Fairy Queen sank onto the golden floor of her home.

Neoli let out a horrified cry. But his shock immediately gave way to heroic determination. “Lio, Nala – help me! We must bring her to the **Dream Machine!** Only when the key touches the heart of the world will she awaken again!”

The three little heroes, who had faithfully followed the little Fairy Queen from the moon all around the world, took hold together. They carried their Queen through the glittering alleys, past the hanging gardens, to the great tower at the end of the city.

“You made it, little Fairy Queen,” Neoli murmured firmly as they reached the Dream Machine. “You have driven away the darkness and freed the world’s dreams from the claws of the shadows!” Neoli then cried with a voice trembling with pride. But the little Fairy Queen hardly heard him; she lay there like a fragile doll made of glass, her breath only a delicate whisper.

Without hesitation, Neoli reached for the completed Glass Key. With a determined jerk, he inserted it into the heart of the Dream Machine and turned it.

Click.

A sound like the ringing of a thousand silver bells filled the Sun City. In that moment, the miracle happened: a rainbow of pure energy shot from the machine directly into the heart of the little Fairy Queen. Like a wilted flower suddenly kissed by magical dew, she began to glow. Her paleness gave way to a shimmering radiance, and her wings unfolded in a splendor that carried all the colors of the universe. She had not only returned – she shone more beautifully than ever before.

The little Fairy Queen opened her eyes. Her gaze was clear, and a smile as warm as the morning sun rested on her lips. She looked at her friends – the brave Lunulis, who had traveled with her through deserts, across oceans, and to the roof of the world.

“Thank you,” she whispered, and her voice sounded like music. “Without you, the world would be a sad place today. You are the true heroes of this journey.”

But a Guardian of Dreams does not rest for long. With renewed vitality, she stepped toward the golden grinding gears of the Dream Machine. She looked at the endless ribbon of human thoughts, which was now flowing brightly through the machine once more. “Oh, look at that!” she cried, wrinkling her nose with a smirk. “A few dark nightmares have snuck in here that have absolutely no business being there!”

With a cheerful snap of her fingers, she sorted the grey shadows out of the glittering chain and let them fall like shooting stars into the infinite sea beneath the Sun City, where they dissolved harmlessly in the foam of the waves.

Neoli stepped to her side and looked at her searchingly. “Do you remember everything now, little Queen?” he asked with a fine smile.

The little Fairy Queen nodded slowly. Her memory had returned like a tidal wave of light.

“Yes, Neoli. I remember everything, but above all, I remember every moment of our adventure that we shared. We haven't just saved the key; we've learned that together, you can defeat even dragons, polar bears, time witches, sand wizards, and all the evil in the world.”

She stepped to the edge of the Sun City, from where she could overlook the entire sleeping Earth. One last time, she raised her magic wand. With a flowing, perfect movement, she traced the horizontal figure-eight – the seal of infinity – into the midnight-blue velvet of the sky.

Her whole body began to vibrate with magical power as she spoke the

ultimate blessing: “***Fortuna, amor, salusque semper nobiscum!***”

A golden rain of glittering dust poured over the continents. It was a promise that now slumbered in the hearts of all people: that happiness, love, and health would accompany them from now on until all eternity, as long as the moon and the sun performed their dance.

The little Fairy Queen and the Lunulis stood hand in hand at the firmament and looked down. The world was safe, the dreams were colorful – and they knew that while this was the end of their journey, it was only the beginning of an eternal friendship.

And who knows what adventures still awaited them.

For the little Fairy Queen decided, for now, to take a vacation on Earth...

Magic Spells

- **Lūx in mē lūceat** (*May the light shine within me*)
- **Omnia impedimenta seipsa tollant** (*May all obstacles remove themselves*)
- **Meum est tempus, me nunc circumvolvitur** (*The time is mine and now revolves around me*)
- **Ad astra una volēmus** (*Let us fly together to the stars*)
- **Malum in mundo in aeternum vincitor** (*May the evil in the world be forever bound*)
- **Permitte mihi propositum meum assequi** (*Let me achieve my purpose*)
- **Ego sum lux mundi** (*I am the light of the world*)
- **Pax hic in aeternum redeat** (*May peace return here forever*)
- **Ut sementem feceris, ita metes** (*As you have sown, so shall you reap*)
- **Nunc liber sum et in aeternum ero** (*Now I am free, and forever I shall be*)
- **Lūx et virtūs semper mecum sint** (*May light and virtue always be with me*)
- **Fortuna, amor, salusque semper nobiscum!** (*May fortune, love, and health be with us always!*)