

A Magical Journey

Use Your Imagination Books

the Third book

A Ball of Golden Light



Sharone Stevenson

A MAGICAL JOURNEY BOOK SERIES

The First Book	An Unusual Day in Fairyland
The Second Book	The Search Begins
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The Fourth Book	Hall of the Silver Threads
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A Ball of Golden Light

Somewhere out in the meadow was a fluffy white dandelion that was quite different from all the other dandelions. Its soft round head was more fluffy and much bigger than the rest. But, not only that, there was something magical about it. Though, by just looking at it, you would never know.

When Mother Nature heard that Beatrix the Butterfly was taking Fairy Blue Light to the Golden City Behind the Sun, she immediately went across the orchard to an old shop inside the trunk of a big oak tree. Over the door, swinging from a rusty old chain, hung a hand carved wooden sign that said:

All Things for Things You Didn't Know You'd Need Shoppe.

She went inside and tinkled a tiny brass bell on the counter. A purple velvet curtain, which hung from a few tarnished brass curtain rings, was slowly pulled to one side. A kindly old gentleman with soft white hair and a long beard, stepped out.

“Good morning madam!” he said courteously. “How may I help you?”

“Oh, good morning!” she replied. “I want some Magic Dust please.”

“Certainly madam! Excuse me for just one moment. I’ll see if we have any left.”

He went to the far end of a shelf and took down a tall empty glass bottle. He opened a long narrow drawer and reached for a pair of spectacles with violet lenses. He put them on and peered at the bottle.

“Yes, there is some left,” he said, and opened the bottle and tipped the contents into a brown paper bag. She thanked him, then left the shop and hurried home.

Mother Nature emptied the contents of the brown paper bag into a soft golden purse, and pulled the drawstrings tight. She hung it over one arm, clasped her hands in front of her, and put her heels together. Then she closed her eyes, counted to three, and imagined she was standing beside a large fluffy dandelion in Mr. Pippin’s garden. And faster than the speed of a shooting star, she was standing beside the fluffiest dandelion she had ever seen.

She turned her back to the breeze and carefully opened the golden purse. She leaned forward and sprinkled the Magic Dust all over the dandelion.

“What are you doing? What is that stuff you’re putting on me? Oh! Now I’m going to . . . to . . . sneeze!” cried an angry airy voice.

“No, you mustn’t sneeze! Please stop yourself! Think of something else, or do anything else, but please don’t sneeze,” she implored.

“Uh . . . Uh . . . I can’t stop myself! It’s coming,” said the dandelion as it started to swell.

“I demand you to stop right now!” said Mother Nature, turning a bright shade of red.

The fluffy dandelion was so shocked by the tone of her voice, that somehow the sneeze managed to disappear.

“That’s better!” she said, feeling somewhat relieved. “We can’t have you sneezing, and that is an order!”

“Yes, Mother Nature,” he said nervously. “I heard you, and I promise I’ll try

not to. But, what will happen when you aren't here to give me another order?"

"Goodness me! Isn't one order enough? Do I have to tell you more than once?" she exclaimed.

Mother Nature pulled the cords of the empty golden purse together, and placed it back over her arm.

"How long is it before I can sneeze? And why can't I sneeze?" whined the dandelion. "I have never sneezed before, and I want to know what it feels like."

"Dandelions are not supposed to sneeze. But, as you make everyone else sneeze, now you know how they feel before they do!" laughed Mother Nature.

"I thought my whole head was going to pop off, and . . ."

"That's exactly what must not happen!" interrupted Mother Nature. "You must not even think about sneezing."

"You still haven't told me why I even wanted to sneeze, and what stuff you put on my head, and why you put it there," he said, feeling more confused than ever.

"Questions! Questions! I like people who ask questions," she replied. "But first, you must promise me, that if I tell you the answers, you won't swell up."

"I – I promise!" said the fluffy dandelion nodding his head.

"Stop!" she cried. "Don't nod your head."

"Why not?" he demanded.

"Because I said so!" she answered sharply.

The dandelion tried hard to keep his fluffy top from moving, but even the gentlest breeze made him sway. So it was very difficult indeed. In fact, it was the most difficult thing he'd ever had to do.

"Now you've told me to keep still, all I want to do is move," he said

irritably, “and I can’t help it!”

“Oh, yes you can!” she said firmly, as she walked slowly around him. When she felt sure he was really trying not to move, she said to him, “I will answer your questions now, if you’re ready.”

“I’m ready!” he replied in a very stiff voice.

“Well!” she began, “you have been chosen for something very special, and if you wait quietly, and without sneezing, you will soon know why.”

“Is that all you’re going to tell me?” he exclaimed.

“Yes, that is all you need to know,” she said, knowing it wasn’t wise to tell him any more.

“I must go now and check up on some pixies who deliberately painted some bluebells red. I don’t know what they’re going to be up to next!” she said crossly, and simply vanished.

“Come back! Come back!” he cried. “I need you to help me. I know I’m going to sneeze any minute.” But, Mother Nature wasn’t there any more.

Over in the meadow, Beatrix the Butterfly went over to a big patch of dandelions and flew as close to them as she could. But there was no way of telling which one held the Magic Dust. She flew back and forth several times, but to her, they all looked the same.

“How am I going to know which one it is?” she asked herself. “The Pink Butterfly told me I would know if I looked inside myself and listened, but I tried that, and it didn’t work this time. Well, there’s no use complaining about it, I’d better just keep looking.”

So she flew over to the next dandelion, and took a deep breath and puffed as hard as she could. But not one single bit of Magic Dust flew out. She continued on, going from one dandelion to the next, but she still couldn’t find it.

“Goodness me, this is tiring,” she sighed. “I’m just not used to all this puffing. Butterflies don’t usually do this kind of thing.”

So she flew to the top of the tallest blade of grass and settled daintily on its tip. She looked at all the dandelions in the meadow below, and shook her head.

“No, I don’t think I’ll ever find it,” she said sadly. “There are so many white fluffy dandelions, and they all look exactly the same.”

Beatrix flew down and began looking again, but this time she noticed that something very odd was happening. Every time she blew on a ball of fluff, she heard strange giggling sounds. Then a soft airy voice said, “What are you trying to do little butterfly?”

Beatrix looked around and saw no one, but more giggles filled the air.

“Where are you?” she asked.

“We’re everywhere,” they laughed. “You’ve been blowing some of us away.”

“If you’re everywhere, then why can’t I see you?” she asked.

“You can, if you look up at the blue sky. That is where we all go.”

Beatrix the Butterfly raised her little pointed head and looked up. She saw very small balls of white fluff with tiny seeds inside, floating everywhere.

“We’ve been waiting for the wind to come, but he is too lazy,” said the soft airy voice. “We all want to travel over the meadow and up into the blue sky, but we can’t do that right now.”

“Maybe I can help you, and in return, perhaps you can help me,” she said kindly.

“Little butterfly, we would be only too glad to help you. What are you doing?”

“I’m searching for the fluffiest dandelion that Mother Nature filled with Magic Dust. Do you know which one it is?” she asked.

Again, she heard gurgles of giggles, and all the dandelions swayed back and forth like a white magic carpet floating in the breeze.

“We might know where it is, but we’re not about to tell you,” teased one of the dandelions. “Keeping secrets is our favourite game, and that is our best secret.”

“That’s silly!” she replied. “Well, if you won’t tell me, then I’ll find someone who will.”

Beatrix wasn’t the slightest bit amused by their silly games, and she didn’t like being teased.

“There must be someone who can help me,” she said, and kept on flying.

Beatrix felt too tired to remember what the Pink Butterfly had told her. But, as she flew farther and farther across the meadow, she could hear two sweet singing voices in the distance.

“Now I remember,” she laughed. “The Pink Butterfly told me to look for the two poppies who were so much in love, that they sang to each other all day long.”

So she flew back towards Mr. Mushroom and close by she saw two poppies cuddled close together. She flew over to them, and settled inside their petals. She listened to their beautiful singing voices and waited until they had finished.

“Dear poppies,” she said sweetly, “your love for each other makes me feel very happy.”

“Thank you!” sang one of the poppies, as it fluttered its long black eyelashes and smiled sweetly. “How could anything be more important than being in love?”

Again, the poppies broke out into a new song. The beautiful words poured out like the colours reflected in a floating bubble as the sunlight

gently stroked it.

“Loving each other is beautiful, but do you know that there are many different ways of sharing love?”

The two poppies gasped and their petals shook. Beatrix the Butterfly waited for them to stop fussing, and then said, “I feel happy when someone needs me to help them, and that is love too.”

“We don’t think that is love. We love each other, and no one else matters,” said the tall poppy proudly.

“Dear poppies, love cannot be locked up and kept just for yourselves, it must be shared.”

“Oh really! We’ve never heard about that,” said the other poppy rather pompously. “We just love each other and that’s the way it’s always been.”

“Yes, I know that,” she replied, “but perhaps one day you’ll want to share it with others, and then you’ll love each other even more.”

“Well, maybe that’s true, but right now it isn’t that way. But do tell us why you’ve come to visit us.”

The poppies swayed closer to each other and their soft red petals touched gently.

“Pardon me little butterfly! We’re forgetting our manners,” said the poppy with the thick long black eyelashes, as she turned to face Beatrix.

“We saw you blowing the fluff off the dandelions and wondered why. Is there anything we can do to help you?”

“Yes, I hope so!” she replied. “I’m searching for the fluffiest dandelion that Mother Nature filled with Magic Dust. I’m tired of going to each one and blowing all the fluff away.”

“Oh my! Oh my!” they both said together, and almost started to sing again, but managed to stop themselves just in time.

“Magic Dust! Why do you need Magic Dust?” they asked.

They both listened carefully while she told them the whole story. When she’d finished, they swayed towards each other and whispered. Then they opened their petals and said, “Dear little butterfly, you already have the answer. You don’t need to tire yourself out trying to blow the fluff off all the dandelions.”

“What do you mean? How am I going to find the Magic Dust, if I don’t blow off the fluff until I find it?” she asked crossly.

“Little Butterfly, the secret to finding the answer to anything is to start moving. And before you know it, you’re inside the answer.”

“You’re teasing me too, and I don’t like it. How can you be *‘inside an answer?’*” she said angrily. “You just don’t know where it is, and all you care about is each other.” The two poppies just smiled.

Once again poor Beatrix was upset. She wondered if anyone was ever going to help her. She turned and flew back to the dandelions. She was so angry she fluttered her wings harder than she’d ever fluttered them before. She flew back and forth several times, and then decided to give up searching.

It was time now to tell Fairy Blue Light that they wouldn’t be going to the Golden City Behind the Sun after all. So feeling very sad, she headed back over to old Mr. Mushroom, and landed right beside Fairy Blue Light.

“Wake up! Wake up! Fairy Blue Light,” she said anxiously.

“Oh thank goodness you’re back! I thought you’d forgotten me,” she said as she slowly opened her eyes.

“But, Beatrix, where are you?” asked Fairy Blue Light, as she looked around and saw no one in sight.

“I’m right here beside you!” Beatrix laughed. “What’s wrong with

you? Why can't you see me?"

"I don't know. But why are you hiding from me? I don't think it's the slightest bit funny!" she replied angrily.

"Can't you really see me Fairy Blue Light?" she asked again.

"No!" she replied. "I can't!"

"Oh my goodness!" Beatrix the Butterfly exclaimed. "The poppies were right. I was inside the answer all the time."

"What are you talking about?" asked Fairy Blue Light.

"It must have happened when I flew across the meadow. I was very angry, and . . ."

"What must have happened?" asked Fairy Blue Light.

"The Magic Dust of course!" she muttered to herself. "I was very angry and fluttered my wings so hard they must have blown it off the dandelion, and up on to me, and now I'm invisible."

She looked at Fairy Blue Light and said to her, "That's why you can't see me."

"I just don't understand you. Why do you have to be invisible Beatrix?" asked Fairy Blue Light. "And, how am I going to travel with you if I can't see you?"

Beatrix the Butterfly laughed, and said, "I'll tell you all about it once we start on our journey. But right now, we must find out how to make you invisible too."

Fairy Blue Light shook her little head and rubbed her eyes.

"I must be dreaming," she thought to herself. "Did she say that I have to be invisible too? I can't believe it!"

"Fairy Blue Light," said Beatrix excitedly, "I think I know what to do. Please keep very still for just a moment."

Beatrix the Butterfly then flew up above Fairy Blue Light and fluttered her

wings and shook some Magic Dust down on to her.

“Oh, there you are,” laughed Fairy Blue Light. “I thought I’d never see you again.”

“Good!” said Beatrix. “Now, at last we’re ready! Climb on my back and hang on. We’ve got a long way to go.”

Fairy Blue Light bent down and gently kissed the sleeping Mr. Mushroom, and then climbed on to Beatrix’ back.

“I must come again and visit him one day,” she thought. “He’s such a lovely old mushroom, and he taught me so much.”

Mr. Mushroom began to wake up as he felt some strange scuffling movements on his back. Then he heard a rapid fluttering of butterfly wings, and some whispering voices. Suddenly he felt lighter as they lifted off and flew away. He opened one eye and looked over the meadow to watch them, but he couldn’t see them anywhere.

“What a strange situation indeed,” he said, as he very slowly opened the other eye.

Mr. Mushroom looked around as far as he could, which wasn’t very far.

“There’s something even more strange!” he muttered to himself. “I heard them leave, but I can’t see them. Oh dear! There must be something wrong with my eyes.”

He blinked several times, but he still couldn’t see them anywhere. He only heard their laughing voices gradually fading away into the distance.

“Very strange indeed! Hmm! Very strange,” he repeated, as he tried to find an answer. Then he suddenly remembered something very important.

“My mother told me that little mushrooms, and in this case little butterflies, should be seen and not heard. And now they are heard and not seen. This is most unusual.”

Mr. Mushroom was completely mystified. It was far too difficult for him to understand. So he closed both eyes, slumped down in the middle, gave a couple of deep snores, and once again took one of his many naps. At last he was left in peace.

CHAPTER TWO

As they flew higher and higher into the clear blue sky, Fairyland was left far behind. Down below she saw Mr. Mushroom's three spots gradually getting smaller, and smaller, and smaller. She crouched down as close as she could to Beatrix' back, and clung tightly to her neck. Up above them was nothing but clear blue sky that went on for ever and ever. There was no sign of the Golden City Behind the Sun, and Fairy Blue Light wondered if they would ever find it.

Although Fairy Blue Light weighed little more than a snowflake, she knew she was an extra load for Beatrix the Butterfly to carry on her back, and she wondered just how far Beatrix could go before she got too tired.

"Are you all right back there Fairy Blue Light?" asked Beatrix the Butterfly. "You seem very quiet."

"Yes, I think so!" she replied, as she leaned closer to Beatrix, and clung a little tighter to her neck.

"You don't need to hold on quite so tightly," said Beatrix. "I can't move my head."

"Oh sorry, Beatrix!" she replied as she softened her grip, and sat up a little straighter and looked around.

"Beatrix, I'm glad we're on our way to the Golden City Behind the Sun. I just can't wait to get there. How long do you think it will take?"

"I really don't know. All I know is that it's a long way," said Beatrix anxiously. "But don't worry Fairy Blue Light, we're safe and protected inside the magic dust. You can relax and enjoy the journey."

“Beatrix, is there anything I can do to help you? I feel so useless just sitting here. Would you like me to sing as we fly along?” she asked.

“If you want to sing, that’s all right with me, but what you can do, is to keep looking for anything that might get in our way. I must trust you, as I can’t turn my head around very far.”

So Fairy Blue Light wriggled until she found a comfortable position, and sang quietly to herself.

Beatrix the Butterfly tried hard to keep her mind focused on the journey ahead, and she knew that it was too far for a butterfly to travel all that distance. But every time that scary thought came in, she pushed it away, and thought of something happy instead.

“Beatrix! Beatrix the Butterfly! Can you hear me?”

“Yes, Fairy Blue Light. What do you want?” she asked.

“Nothing Beatrix!” she replied.

“Then, why did you call me?”

“I didn’t!” she answered.

“That’s very strange. I just heard my name. Are you quite sure you didn’t call me?” she asked again.

“Yes, Beatrix. I’m quite sure.”

Beatrix didn’t usually imagine things. But this time, as she was feeling a little anxious, she decided it must have been her imagination.

“Beatrix the Butterfly!” called the voice again. “This is your friend the Pink Butterfly. I am calling you from the Golden City Behind the Sun. It isn’t your imagination!”

Beatrix swerved slightly, wobbled to one side, and then hastily straightened up.

“What’s wrong Beatrix?” asked Fairy Blue Light. “I nearly fell off!”

“Shsh! It’s all right. There’s nothing wrong Fairy Blue Light. Please

be very quiet for just a few moments. I have something special to do.”

Fairy Blue Light shook her little arms, and wound them ever tighter around Beatrix’ neck. She wondered why she had to keep quiet, but she trusted Beatrix and didn’t want to annoy her.

Beatrix the Butterfly closed her eyes and listened hard. She waited for the voice to return.

“Beatrix, can you hear me now?”

“Yes! Yes! Is that really you Pink Butterfly?” she asked excitedly.

“Yes, Beatrix, of course it’s me,” she laughed. “I want to know why you’re worrying about travelling so far on your own. Have you forgotten that I told you to look out for the Little White Cloud? He is going to meet us halfway to the Golden City Behind the Sun.”

“Oh, of course! I sort of forgot,” she mumbled. “I began to think I had imagined what you’d said. And now I’m positively sure I did, as I don’t see any clouds anywhere in the sky.”

“Beatrix! How could you not trust me? I’m your best friend, and I would never lie to you!”

“Oh, I’m sorry Pink Butterfly. I must have been worrying too much, and that made me doubt what you’d told me.”

The Pink Butterfly was upset that Beatrix had doubted her, and wondered what to do. She thought for a moment and then replied, “Beatrix, even though right now you can’t see what I promised you, you must trust and know that it will happen at the right time.”

“Thank you Pink Butterfly. I’ll keep looking out for the Little White Cloud,” replied Beatrix happily. “Do you know when he is going to appear? And which way do I go?”

“Just follow what your heart tells you to do, and it will be the right way. But before I go Beatrix, there is one more very important thing to tell you.”

“Oh, what is that Pink Butterfly?”

“When you land on the Little White Cloud, you have a choice to make. You can either go on with us to the Golden City Behind the Sun, or you can return to Fairyland. You cannot have both. So, on the journey, you must really think hard about it.”

The voice suddenly stopped, and Beatrix wondered what the Pink Butterfly had meant. A decision like that would be very hard to make. She wanted to be with Fairy Blue Light after taking her so far, but she knew that if she went to the Golden City Behind the Sun, she would never be able to return to her home in Fairyland.

“Beatrix, have you finished the special thing you had to do?” asked Fairy Blue Light anxiously. “If you have, I have a question to ask you.”

“Yes I have! What is it Fairy Blue Light?”

“When you told me to be quiet, I suddenly saw your antennae waving rapidly back and forth, and I wondered why they were doing that?”

“Oh yes,” she laughed. “I’m sure they were!”

Fairy Blue Light laughed too, and said, “They looked so funny, and I had to crouch down to keep out of their way.”

“They always wave like that when I’m listening hard. But it means I’ve got some good news to tell you,” she said excitedly.

“Where could you get news from up here? And what were you listening to?” she asked.

“Well, if you don’t keep asking me so many questions, I’ll tell you!”

“Oh sorry!” she replied. “But I really want to know.”

“When I asked you if you were calling me, I was mistaken. It was my friend, the Pink Butterfly, calling me from Golden City Behind the Sun.”

“How could she talk to you?” she gasped.

“I can’t really explain it, but I can hear her talking to me inside my

head. It just happens.”

Fairy Blue Light didn't understand it, but as there was no Pink Butterfly anywhere in sight, it had to be true.

Beatrix thought for a moment, then said, “She reminded me that we must look out for a Little White Cloud that will meet us halfway.”

“A Little White Cloud!” Fairy Blue Light exclaimed. “Beatrix, how are we going to see even a little cloud, when there isn't a single one anywhere in the sky?”

“I don't know. But the Pink Butterfly told me that we must believe her, and that there will be one, and we'll find it somehow.”

Fairy Blue Light looked around and wondered if she could really believe that. But then, this wasn't the only strange thing that had happened to her since she started on this adventure. So anything was possible.

“Anyway, now I have something to do,” she said happily. “Beatrix, I'll watch out for the Little White Cloud and tell you the minute I see it.”

Beatrix smiled as she knew Fairy Blue Light always liked to be doing things. But, she also knew that she'd have to tell her the rest of the message, and that wasn't going to be easy. Beatrix paused for a few moments, then said carefully, “Fairy Blue Light, there was one other thing the Pink Butterfly told me.”

“Oh, good! What was that?” Fairy Blue Light asked excitedly.

“She said that when we land on the Little White Cloud, she is going to meet us there. Then, he is going to take both of you on the next part of your journey.”

“What do you mean by ‘both of you?’” Fairy Blue Light cried. “Aren't you going with me all the way to the Golden City Behind the Sun?”

“Actually, I'm not sure yet,” she replied. “The Pink Butterfly told me

that when we landed on the Little White Cloud, I could choose whether or not to return to Fairyland, or go on with you to the Golden City Behind the Sun and stay there forever.”

“Oh, Beatrix!” she gasped. “How are you going to decide what to do?”

“I don’t know yet. Hopefully, as we’re flying along, the answer will come to me.”

Beatrix kept fluttering along as fast as her tiny wings could move. The blue sky got lighter as they flew higher. The sunbeams and the breeze played games around them, so right now, they didn’t feel too lonely.

But, after a while, even that became boring. Fairy Blue Light found her thoughts wandering back to Fairyland. She remembered how sad she’d been, and began thinking of all the tears she had cried. And then, worst of all, she began to feel sorry for herself.

With a slight tremor in her voice she said, “Beatrix, I thought being a fairy would be easy. I’d no idea there were so many scary things to do. Taking care of flowers and loving them is easy, but now I wish I hadn’t chosen to be a fairy. I find it’s getting more difficult every day, and I don’t know why.”

“Oh, Fairy Blue Light, you’re so wrong. It must be wonderful being a fairy. You didn’t make a mistake. Just give yourself some time and things will change,” she said kindly.

Fairy Blue Light thought for a moment, then said, “When the Crystal Fairy gave me my name, it made me feel happy inside, and all I wanted to do was to make other people happy too.”

“But, Fairy Blue Light, it is a beautiful name, and it really suits you. And you do make people feel happy.”

This made Fairy Blue Light feel a bit better. She remembered her

fairy friends she knew and loved, and hoped that Beatrix was right.

“Beatrix,” she said, “you have a beautiful name too. Was it given to you or did you choose it yourself?”

“Well, that’s a long story,” she laughed. “I’m sure you wouldn’t want to hear about it.”

“Oh, but I would. Please tell me everything Beatrix,” she pleaded.

“Well, if I do tell you as we fly along, you must promise to keep looking out for the Little White Cloud.”

“I shall!...I shall!” she said eagerly. “Please hurry up and start!”

“Are you quite sure you want to hear it all?” she asked again.

“Yes! Absolutely everything!” replied Fairy Blue Light, just bursting with curiosity. She moved into a more comfortable position and said, “I’m ready!”

Beatrix knew this was going to take a long time, but telling her story would help to pass the time, and maybe the Little White Cloud might just sneak out and be there waiting for them.

She began by saying, “Well, you’ll be quite surprised to know that Beatrix the Butterfly wasn’t the name my parents gave me. It was given to me after something very wonderful happened.”

“Oh Beatrix! What happened?” asked Fairy Blue Light, wriggling with anticipation.

“Fairy Blue Light, if you want to hear the whole story, please keep still and listen. If you interrupt me I’ll forget where I got up to, and you’ll never hear it all.”

“Oh sorry! I promise I won’t do that again,” she said, as she held her lips tightly together.

Beatrix paused while she waited for her to settle down, and then she continued with her story.

“Well, the truth is, I wasn’t always as beautiful as I am now. In fact, I thought I was very plain. My name was Katie the Caterpillar, and all I ever did was crawl up and down leaves and eat them.”

“I just can’t imagine you doing anything like that Beatrix,” said Fairy Blue Light giggling, and quickly put her hand over her mouth.

“Well, it’s true. My entire family were happy just being caterpillars, but I wasn’t. Somehow I just felt different. While they were munching on green leaves, I liked to sit alone on the edge of a leaf and write beautiful poetry. I would spend hours thinking about being free. I dreamed of things I would do, and places I would go. And I wondered what it would be like not having to climb up and down blades of grass, and over clods of earth, only to find on the other side there were more blades of grass, and more clods of earth, and nothing else.”

“Oh, that’s awful,” agreed Fairy Blue Light.

Beatrix lifted her head and closed her eyes, and said, “I wished for the most beautiful wings, and the freedom to dance and to fly in the air.” She sighed as she remembered how she had felt, and then smiled to herself because of what eventually happened.

“But there I was, a roly-poly Katie the Caterpillar. With so many legs to take care of, I knew I’d never dance, and most certainly never fly.”

“I know exactly how you felt,” whispered Fairy Blue Light. “I feel the same way now, without my wings.”

Beatrix stopped fluttering her wings for a while, and just floated on the breeze. It was hard to fly and talk at the same time. It felt so good just gliding along as her body now felt quite tired. When Beatrix the Butterfly found a comfortable hovering speed, she continued with her story.

“One day, I was feeling very green. Just about as green as any caterpillar feels when it has just eaten one whole leaf. Well, I was resting on my next meal,

enjoying the warmth of the sun, when I heard a sweet little voice whispering to me. I couldn't see where it came from and I tried to twist around, but I was so fat even turning around was a problem."

"Is this supposed to be a sad story Beatrix, because I keep wanting to laugh?" she giggled.

"Actually, you could call it a 'sad-happy' story, but please let me continue."

Beatrix smiled to herself as she noticed that Fairy Blue Light never missed a single word she said. So she made sure she chose every word very carefully.

"Then, the mysterious voice asked me if I wanted to be a butterfly. I was so surprised, I took a backward flip right off the leaf. Somehow six of my front legs managed to hold on to the edge, and I saved myself from falling down to the ground. I curled all my legs in under me and held on tightly. And somehow I just managed to pull myself up until I could see over the edge of the leaf."

"Who was it? Who was it?" asked Fairy Blue Light excitedly.

"Keep still Fairy Blue Light. You'll fall off if you jump around so much," scolded Beatrix.

"Oh, sorry! I can't help it. I just can't seem to sit still!" she replied.

"Well, it was a beautiful fairy. I was so excited I nearly let go of the leaf completely."

"Who was she? I might know her," asked Fairy Blue Light.

"Maybe, but we'll find that out later," she replied. "Anyway, there she sat with her soft silk dress draped over her knees with her arms clasped around them. She told me that my dream of becoming a butterfly, and being able to fly wherever I wanted to, was so strong, that nothing could stop me from doing it." Beatrix paused, waiting for Fairy Blue Light to interrupt her, but this time she remained quiet.

“I wondered why any beautiful fairy would waste her time talking to me, and especially to tease me about being a butterfly. So, I hauled myself back up on the leaf, sorted out my legs, and sat down beside her.”

“What did the fairy look like Beatrix?” asked Fairy Blue Light excitedly.

“Oh, I’ll never forget that,” she said smiling, as she remembered the little fairy. “She was dressed in pink from head to toe, and her wings sparkled like a thousand jewels. But the most striking thing about her was a rose pink light that twinkled over her heart.”

“She sounds so beautiful Beatrix. Do you think she lives near me in Fairyland? I would like to meet her.”

“I don’t know the answer to that Fairy Blue Light, but maybe one day you will. But hush now and please let me finish my story.”

“Sorry Beatrix,” she said with a happy sigh, and waited for Beatrix to continue.

“As I told you, nothing was quite as awful as being Katie the Caterpillar. So I looked the fairy right in the eyes and told her I wanted my dream to come true.”

Beatrix began fluttering her wings again. The breeze had left them and had gone off to play somewhere else. After she gained some height again, she levelled out and continued telling her story.

“The little fairy then told me how to attach myself to a leaf, and how to spin a silky protective coat around myself. She said that when I was finished, I would fall off to sleep. And that was all I had to do.”

“How wonderful Beatrix, and so simple. How long did you sleep?”

“I don’t really know, but one day I woke up with a very excited feeling inside my tummy. I knew I wanted to get out of my old dried up home. It no longer felt warm and cozy. Then, just above my head, I saw a tiny speck of sunlight, and my old home began to split open from top to bottom.

When there was enough room for me to poke my head out, I wriggled and wriggled until I was right outside.”

“Did you have wings? Could you fly?” asked Fairy Blue Light, almost trembling with excitement.

“Well, I felt something strange on my back, but I was so tired from all that wriggling, that I must have dozed off in the warmth of the sun. When I awoke, the little fairy had come back to me and was sitting right by my side.”

“Oh Beatrix! How wonderful,” she sighed.

Fairy Blue Light leaned forward and held on even tighter to Beatrix’ neck. She didn’t want to miss a single word.

“What did she say to you?” she asked breathlessly.

“She told me that I was free to go wherever I wanted to. But I just couldn’t believe her. So I slowly turned my head around and saw the most beautiful silky wings on my back.”

“Beatrix, you still haven’t told me how your name got changed,” said Fairy Blue Light, now very anxious to hear the end of the story.

“I’m just getting to that, if you’ll just give me time,” she laughed.

“Oh sorry Beatrix! Please do go on.”

“The little fairy then told me that Katie the Caterpillar was gone forever, and from now on, I would be called Beatrix the Butterfly.”

“I just love it! I just love it!” said Fairy Blue Light clapping her hands.

Beatrix swerved a bit off course as she laughed out loud, remembering how happy she had felt.

“I fluttered my newly found wings, and the breeze lifted me off the green leaf. I headed immediately towards the nearest flowers. I couldn’t believe that I actually looked down at them, instead of trying hard to look

up at them.”

“I no longer wished I could just see across the meadow, but I could see meadows, and more meadows, all filled with beautiful flowers. It was just breathtaking. I liked everything about being Beatrix the Butterfly, and I still do.”

“What a wonderful story. Thank you for telling me,” said Fairy Blue Light.

“You are the only person I have ever told. And, whoever would’ve thought I’d be carrying a fairy on my back, and having an exciting adventure. I must admit, my dream never went that far. But, once you start a dream, it keeps unfolding and there is no turning back. So, just make sure you dream for things that are good and cause no one any harm. Otherwise the dream might take you where you don’t want to go.”

“I must remember that Beatrix. That could become quite scary,” she agreed.

“Beatrix, I can’t see the Little White Cloud anywhere. Do you think he has forgotten to come and meet us?”

“No! He’ll be there. When the Great Being of Light gives you a job to do, you always complete it.”

But, Beatrix the Butterfly still hoped they were travelling in the right direction, and that the Little White Cloud would appear eventually. But Fairy Blue Light wasn’t so sure.

CHAPTER THREE

Beatrix the Butterfly needed some time to do some deep thinking, so she flew quietly along. Her delicate wings felt very tired and the breeze wasn’t helping at all. And she wondered how much farther they had to go. After a while she asked Fairy Blue Light anxiously, “ Can you see the Little White Cloud yet? Please take a good look around and tell me if you see any

thing. I just hope we're going in the right direction."

Fairy Blue Light carefully stood up between Beatrix' wings, and stretched up as high as she could and looked as far as she could into the distance.

"No, Beatrix!" she replied. "I don't see a cloud anywhere. I think he has forgotten we're coming."

"Oh, I hope not," she replied. "The Pink Butterfly is always very reliable. Maybe something is wrong with the Little White Cloud. I know they can be rather moody at times."

"Beatrix, what happens if you can't fly any farther?" Fairy Blue Light asked anxiously.

"Please don't talk like that Fairy Blue Light. We won't worry about that until we have to."

"Oh, Beatrix, it's all my fault," she cried. "If I hadn't been afraid of looking after the magic raindrop, none of this would have happened."

"Oh, that's nonsense!" said Beatrix. "We're having a wonderful adventure, and they don't happen every day."

"Well yes, that's true," she replied. "But . . ."

"No, 'buts' Fairy Blue Light. If I find I can't fly any farther, I'll head over to the nearest sunbeam and slide down it back to Fairyland. However, this is *our* adventure, and we're not going to give up because it's getting difficult."

"Oh, good, Beatrix!" replied Fairy Blue Light, clapping her hands happily.

"I agree! It will be fun seeing how far we can go."

"Sometimes when things get difficult," said Beatrix thoughtfully, "help comes at the last minute, and it's usually not in the way one might be expecting it."

"Don't worry Beatrix. I'll keep looking for him," she said, now feeling a little

more hopeful.

Fairy Blue Light stared out into the clear blue sky, and for a long time she saw nothing. Then suddenly in the distance, she saw a tiny speck of golden light.

“Beatrix! Beatrix! Look over there,” she said pointing to it. “Can you see a tiny ball of golden light?”

Beatrix stopped flying and hovered for a moment. She looked all around.

“No! I can’t see anything?” she replied. “Where?”

“Right over there,” said Fairy Blue Light, as she leaned farther forward over Beatrix’ neck, pointing towards it.

“Oh yes, now I can see it,” she replied excitedly. “I wonder what it is!” And they both continued to stare as hard as they could.

“Just keep watching it, and let me know if you see anything else,” she said calmly.

Beatrix continued flying along in the same direction, and Fairy Blue Light watched the tiny ball of golden light.

“Beatrix, it seems to be growing bigger, and bigger, and there’s something very odd about it. I think I hear it singing.”

Beatrix paused for a moment and wriggled her little antennae, listening as hard as she could.

“Yes, I can hear it too,” she replied. “But, I think we must be imagining it.”

Beatrix started to move slowly forward again, but this time in the direction of the ball of golden light.

“No, I don’t think I’m imagining it,” said Fairy Blue Light. “I can hear it quite clearly, and it seems to be getting much louder.”

Beatrix paused again to listen. “Yes, you’re right! It is singing. It must be a sign,” she said happily. “The Great Being of Light always sends help,

if you take the time to listen.”

She was so excited, her little heart pounded in her ears as she tried to fly faster and higher.

“Oh, Beatrix!” cried Fairy Blue Light suddenly. “I don’t know what it is, but it’s coming right at us. It can’t see us. Move Beatrix! Move!”

“I can’t! I can’t!” she cried. “It’s too late. I can’t fly fast enough to get out of its way.”

Fairy Blue Light crouched down between Beatrix’ wings and watched the ball of golden light coming closer and closer, and faster and faster.

“Beatrix!” she screamed, her heart pounding in her chest. “Let’s call out to it!”

“Yes, let’s. When I count to three, take a deep breath and yell as loud as you can . . . One . . . two . . . three . . . Help! Help!” they shouted over and over again. But their soft delicate voices didn’t carry very far.

Fairy Blue Light reached up and frantically waved her arms about. But it didn’t seem to see or hear them, and it was still heading directly towards them.

Maestro Skylark was having a wonderful adventure. He loved speeding through space with nothing in his way to stop him. The air rushed by his ears and swept back over his tightly folded wings as he headed straight for Fairyland. But now he began to hear some strange sounds, and slowed down to listen.

“That’s peculiar,” he said, “I could have sworn I heard someone calling for help. But no one could be this far from Fairyland. That’s just too preposterous to even consider.”

But, as he flew closer towards where the voices came from, he saw a very strange sight.

“My! Oh my! What do we have here?” he said in utter disbelief.

“It looks like a butterfly with something blue between its wings. And the blue ‘thing’ is waving its arms around frantically. This is absolutely unbelievable,” he said, as he swung his head to and fro.

He blinked his beady eyes several times to see if he was dreaming. But, when he opened them again, it was still there. Now he was curious, and wanted to find out what it was, so he flew directly towards it.

“My goodness! I just can’t believe my eyes,” he exclaimed, as he got even closer. “It’s a butterfly with a blue fairy riding on her back, and they’re trying to fly away from me. Oh dear, I must have frightened them.”

He flared out his wings and slowed down. He filled his lungs with sweet fresh air, lifted his head high and sang in his most beautiful voice.

“I was right Beatrix,” said Fairy Blue Light excitedly. “It is singing. But, how can a ball of golden light sing?”

“I don’t know,” said Beatrix. “But it sounds like a Meadow Skylark. And there’s no way one could be this high up in the sky.”

“That’s odd!” said Fairy Blue Light. “It looks different now. The ball looks as if it has wings. But I know that’s quite impossible too.”

Beatrix agreed with her, and then said, “Well, it looks as if we’ll soon find out. It’s slowing down now, and is coming directly towards us.”

They both stared at it. After a few moments Fairy Blue Light suddenly squealed excitedly, “Oh Beatrix, you’re right! It is a Meadow Skylark. But I just don’t understand why he’s this far up in the sky.”

She leaned forward and gave Beatrix a huge hug and said hopefully, “Maybe he can tell us if he saw the Little White Cloud.”

Maestro Skylark circled around them, and then flew slowly along beside Beatrix.

“Where in the world are you two ladies going to?” he demanded.

“That is what we were going to ask you,” replied Beatrix crossly.

“You really frightened us.”

“I’m sorry! I didn’t mean to do that. But I didn’t think you could see me. I am invisible you know!” he said proudly, with a haughty toss of his head.

“Well, so are we!” she replied, just as proudly.

“How can that possibly be? I just don’t believe you,” he said, shaking his head from side to side.

“If I couldn’t see you, then I wouldn’t be talking to you now,” replied Beatrix, feeling angrier than ever.

He blinked and then peered at them, and moved even closer.

“Hmm! Very strange! Very strange indeed,” he said to himself.

“Excuse me sir! What did you say?” asked Beatrix.

“Er – actually, I was just going to ask you, if you were going to, or coming from Fairyland?” he said with a touch of sarcasm in his voice.

Fairy Blue Light raised her head and peeped out from between Beatrix’ wings, and said softly, “Sir, we just left Fairyland, and we’re going to the Golden City Behind the Sun. We’re covered in Magic Dust, and that’s why we’re invisible too.”

Maestro Skylark gasped, and said in a trembling voice, “I have never, in all my life, heard of anything quite so outrageous!”

“Well, it’s true sir,” she replied curtly.

“Oh, is it?” he replied, not believing a word she’d said. “And why would you be going there? It’s much too dangerous for a butterfly to travel that far. And anyway, no one is allowed in the Golden City Behind the Sun unless they’ve left Fairyland forever.”

“Yes, we know that sir, but we have been given special permission to go there,” Beatrix replied, desperately trying to make him believe her.

“I, Maestro Skylark,” he said pompously, “have just come directly

from the Golden City Behind the Sun, and I heard nothing about *you* being expected. I'm very important there, and I know everything that's happening."

Beatrix the Butterfly looked directly at him and said, "The Pink Butterfly asked me to take my friend, Fairy Blue Light, up there."

"Oh, she did, did she!" he said, feeling this was not the truth.

"Yes, she did!" replied Beatrix firmly. "And also, she told me that a Little White Cloud would meet us half way. But we haven't seen him yet. But now I'm getting too tired to go any farther, and I don't know what to do."

Maestro Skylark stared intently at the strange little pair, and thought it must be a dream. But indeed, they were both quite real.

"Hmm! I see!" he replied, nodding his head quizzically. "The Pink Butterfly – a friend of yours, is she? Then, who might you be?" he asked rather bluntly, as he stared down his bony beak directly at Beatrix.

"Oh! Pardon me sir. I'm forgetting my manners. I'm Beatrix the Butterfly. And . . . and did you," she stuttered, "just happen to see a Little White Cloud on your way from the Golden City Behind the Sun?"

Maestro Skylark shook his head in utter disbelief. He looked up to where he had come from, and then slowly twisted his head around in all directions.

"No!" he replied. "I haven't seen one, and I can't see one, and I don't think there's any chance you'll see one either. Little White Clouds don't like being alone in the sky."

Beatrix' wings grew heavier and heavier, and they hardly fluttered any more. A tiny tear trickled down her little pointed face, and she said in the saddest voice, "It's no use Fairy Blue Light. We'll have to turn back. I'm far too tired to go any farther."

Maestro Skylark nodded his head and said, "I think that's a very

good idea Miss Beatrix. But, on the other hand, strange things do happen up here. However, I must be off now. I've already wasted too much of my time talking with you."

He shook himself vigorously, and then preened his beautiful feathers back into place. But, before he flew off, he had one more question to ask. "Pardon me for asking, but who gave you permission to go to the Golden City Behind the Sun?"

"The Great Being of Light," replied Beatrix the Butterfly, lowering her voice to a whisper.

Pompous Maestro Skylark's stomach plummeted. His wings stopped flapping, and he rapidly began losing height.

"The Great Being of Light!" he exclaimed. "Oh my goodness me!" Oh, my! Oh, my!"

"What's the matter?" Beatrix cried, as she watched him fall farther away from them. "What have I said? Please come back."

"Oh, it's nothing – nothing at all," he called back, as his strong wings flapped unsteadily and he continued to wobble back and forth.

But it was far more than nothing. In fact it was terrible. Somehow he managed to stop himself from falling, and desperately struggled to hover in place.

"Now I remember," he said to himself in utter disbelief. "Just before I left the Golden City Behind the Sun, I was asked to look out for a butterfly with a fairy riding on her back. And I completely forgot." He wondered how he, Maestro Skylark, could be so imperfect. He rolled his eyes, and shook his head angrily, and said to himself, "If I don't help them, I will be too embarrassed to return to the Golden City Behind the Sun again. My music students would laugh at me if they found out."

So quickly he got his wings flapping in an orderly manner. He flew

back up to them, and said rather reluctantly, “Ladies, I have no choice but to help you. My wings are far stronger than yours Miss Beatrix, and I can fly higher and faster.”

“But we wouldn’t want to take you out of your way, sir!” said Beatrix the Butterfly kindly.

“Now, enough of that nonsense Miss Beatrix! Flutter over to my back and climb on,” he demanded.

“Oh, thank you so much sir,” Beatrix replied politely.

Fairy Blue Light leaned forward and clung tightly to Beatrix’ as she fluttered over towards Maestro Skylark.

“Careful now. I’ll keep as still as I can. Come on, hurry up!” he urged impatiently.

Beatrix the Butterfly managed to land safely on Maestro Skylark’s back. She folded her wings tightly together. Fairy Blue Light tucked herself down as low as she could.

“Are you ready?” he asked.

“Yes sir!” they both replied together.

“Then we’re off!” he said, and turned and headed directly upwards to the Golden City Behind the Sun. He moved faster than either of them had ever moved before.

“Isn’t this fun? What a wonderful adventure we’re having,” whispered Fairy Blue Light into Beatrix’ ears.

“Yes, it is!” replied Beatrix gasping for breath.

He was definitely the most beautiful skylark they’d ever seen, and they felt so honoured to be riding on his back. Usually, this type of activity was far beneath Maestro Skylark’s dignity. However, when you mention the name ‘Great Being of Light’, self-importance quickly disappears.

After they had been travelling for quite some time, Fairy Blue Light

got tired of sitting in one position so she raised her head just a teeny-weeny bit and looked around. And there it was, floating along all on its own.

“The Little White Cloud! The Little White Cloud!” she shouted as loudly as she could. “Can you see it Maestro Skylark?”

He raised his head so fast that Beatrix thought they were going to fall off. Then he said in his most conceited voice, “Yes, of course I can. I saw it quite a while ago, but I chose not to mention it. I didn’t want you both jumping up and down on my back, and slowing me down.”

Beatrix the Butterfly looked back at Fairy Blue Light and winked. Of course, Maestro Skylark had to be the first, and the best, at everything he did.

“Little White Cloud, we’re coming, we’re coming,” they called out as loudly as they could. And Maestro Skylark now headed directly towards it.

The Little White Cloud looked soft and fluffy as it floated in the clear blue sky. However, they didn’t know that on the other side he was looking and feeling very grey, actually almost black, and that could mean trouble.

“I’m so happy I could sing,” laughed Fairy Blue Light, as the odd little three-some now flew directly towards the Little White Cloud.

“Then just sing!” laughed Maestro Skylark. “And I’ll join you.” He took a deep breath, opened his bony beak and filled the air with streams of colourful musical sounds.

Fairy Blue Light also started to sing, but after a while she decided it was better to listen. It was hard trying to compete with his powerful voice.

Poor Beatrix was still tired from all the flying, and she definitely didn’t want to sing. But, she did feel just a little happier now, except for one thing. She was still wondering what to do when Fairy Blue Light was safely

on the Little White Cloud. And, by the speed they were now travelling, she knew she'd have to decide fairly quickly. But as hard as she tried, she just couldn't decide what to do.

“Maybe if I wait until I get there,” she thought to herself, “it might be easier to make a decision. Many things can happen that might change the whole plan, so there's no use worrying ahead of time.”

So with that thought in mind she settled down to enjoy the flight.
What do you think Beatrix the Butterfly should do?



Question

When you are given something important to remember, do you make sure that you remember it?

Project

Take out your coloured pencils or paints, and colour the poppies in bright red, and the leaves and stalks in green.

Paint the butterfly in any colour you like.

Poppies



Colored by: _____

All About the Fourth book

Hall of the Silver Threads

There's trouble in the Golden City Behind the Sun. The Little White Cloud is sulking in a corner, and refuses to go out and meet Maestro Skylark, Beatrix the Butterfly and Fairy Blue Light. Mother Nature is called in to help, but even she can't seem to solve the problem. Meanwhile, the little trio of travellers is closing in fast. This is going to require a very special solution.

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