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Opening extract from
**Hattie B Magical Vet:
The Unicorn's Horn**

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My dear Hattie,

What wonderful news that you cured your first dragon! I knew you'd be a natural vet. The magical creatures of Bellua are certainly more unusual than the animals in your parents' practice!

On a more serious note, Hattie, a little fire-winged bird told me that it was King Ivar of the Imps who had stolen that young dragon's magical voice. That is bad news indeed as I doubt he'll stop there - the creatures of Bellua need the Guardian more than ever now! I'm sad I can't be there for them any more but there's no one better than you for the job. Just be on your guard, and trust your friends.

Do pop by for some pixie pine tea when you're back.

Uncle B

P.S. Remember: don't tell anyone about the Kingdom of Bellua - no one must know!





Chills and Charms ★.

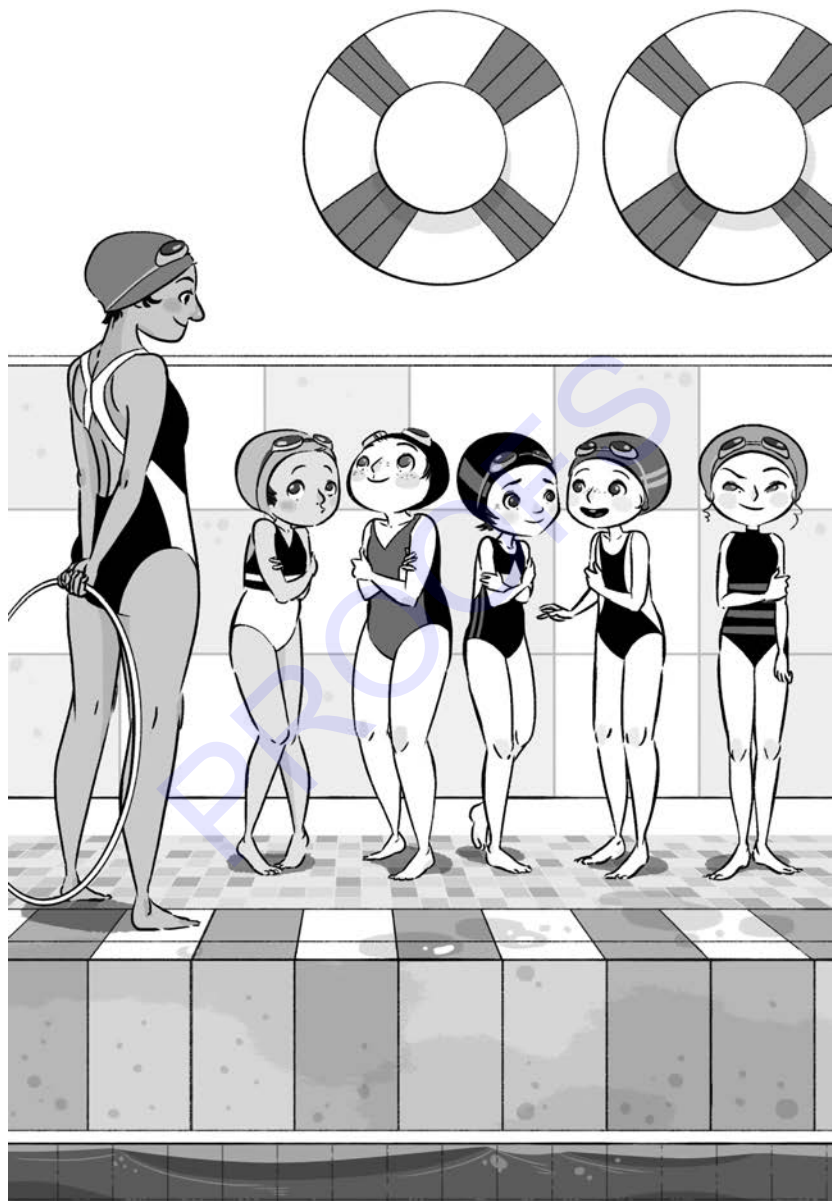
Hattie Bright's teeth were chattering as she stood at the side of the swimming pool. She'd just swum five lengths of breaststroke and her wet costume felt cold now that she was out of the water.

'Right, girls,' said Mrs Riley, the swimming teacher. She grabbed three yellow rings from beside the pool and hurled them into the

water. ‘Today at Swimming Club we’ll be working towards our lifesaving badge. The next thing I need you all to do is dive down and grab those rings from the bottom of the pool. Who would like to go first?’ she asked the shivering line of girls in front of her.

‘I love diving,’ whispered Hattie’s best friend, Chloe, into her ear, ‘don’t you?’

Hattie nodded in agreement. She was really looking forward to getting her lifesaving badge. Hattie loved helping other people almost as much as she loved helping poorly animals at her parents’ vet’s practice. She went to the practice whenever she could and



everybody knew she wanted to be a vet herself when she was older.

A loud splash announced that the first person had dived in without even volunteering aloud. Sure enough, Hattie soon spotted Victoria Frost, probably the meanest girl at school, climbing elegantly out of the far end of the pool, with barely a hair out of place and not a wrinkle in her shimmering pink swimming costume. Victoria's two best friends, Jodie and Louisa, dived in next before anyone else had the chance. They scooped up the rings easily, then returned them to Mrs Riley and followed Victoria to the side of the pool, where she was

now sitting on a bench, her long legs stretched out in front of her.

‘OK, just you two to go then,’ said Mrs Riley, throwing the rings back in the pool, but not before raising a disapproving eyebrow at Victoria and her friends. ‘Hattie, you dive in first. Chloe, you can go after her.’

Hattie moved to the very edge of the pool and placed her feet together, curling her toes over the edge of the smooth cream tiles, but when she looked into the rippling blue water she felt a flutter of nerves in her tummy. She could only just see the yellow rings at the bottom of the pool, even though she’d watched

Mrs Riley throw them in seconds ago. Hattie took a deep breath, placed her arms in a neat curve above her head and prepared to dive in.



‘Is everything OK, Hattie?’

The voice made Hattie jump. It took her a moment to realize it must have come from Mrs Riley, who was now striding towards her, a look of curiosity on her face. Hattie wondered how long she’d been standing there, waiting to dive. It felt like it had only been a moment or two, but then she spotted Victoria and her friends pretending to look at their watches and mouthing fake yawns.

‘Doesn’t Swimming Club finish at half past four?’ she heard Victoria whisper loudly to Louisa. ‘I do hope Hattie makes it into the water before teatime!’

Hattie felt herself blushing at Victoria’s mean words. *I can do this!* she told herself, stretching her arms as high above her head as she could. But then why could she feel herself shaking from her fingertips to her toes? During half-term Hattie and Chloe had gone to the new theme park outside town and had been on every ride, including the Terrifying Tumbler, twice! Hattie hadn’t been scared even once then, so why was she so nervous now? Hattie felt as if she was frozen solid.

Chloe stepped forward and slipped her arm round her friend's trembling shoulders. 'Hey, Hattie,' she said gently, 'why don't we hold hands and jump in together? You grab one ring and I'll get the other.'

Hattie knew Chloe was just trying to be kind, but it was no use. All she wanted to do was get away from the water. She mumbled a quick 'sorry' to Mrs Riley and, with the sound of Victoria and her friends' sniggers ringing in her ears, she ran away from the pool and into the changing room.

