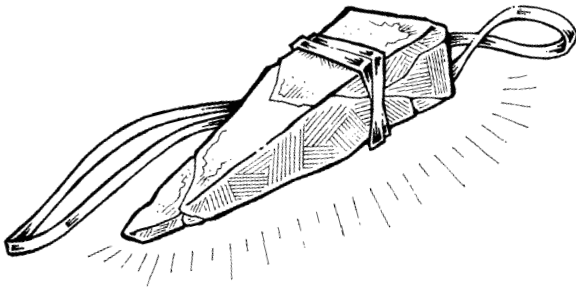


KENDRA
KANDLESTAR
AND THE SHARD FROM GREEVE

BOOK
3

Written and Illustrated by
Lee Edward Födi



SIMPLY READ BOOKS

Published in 2014 by Simply Read Books
www.simplyreadbooks.com
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First published in 2009 by Brown Books Publishing Group

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Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Födi, Lee Edward
Kendra Kandlestar and the Shard from Greeve / written and illustrated by Lee Edward Födi.

ISBN 978-1-927018-27-9

I. Title.

We gratefully acknowledge for their financial support of our publishing program the Canada Council for the Arts, the BC Arts Council, and the Government of Canada through the Canada Book Fund (CBF).

Manufactured in the US.

Book design by Lee Edward Födi
Cover design by Sara Gillingham

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

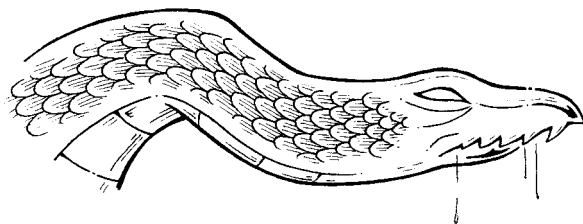
For my
students,
who have blessed
me with
countless stories;
now, here is
one for **you.**

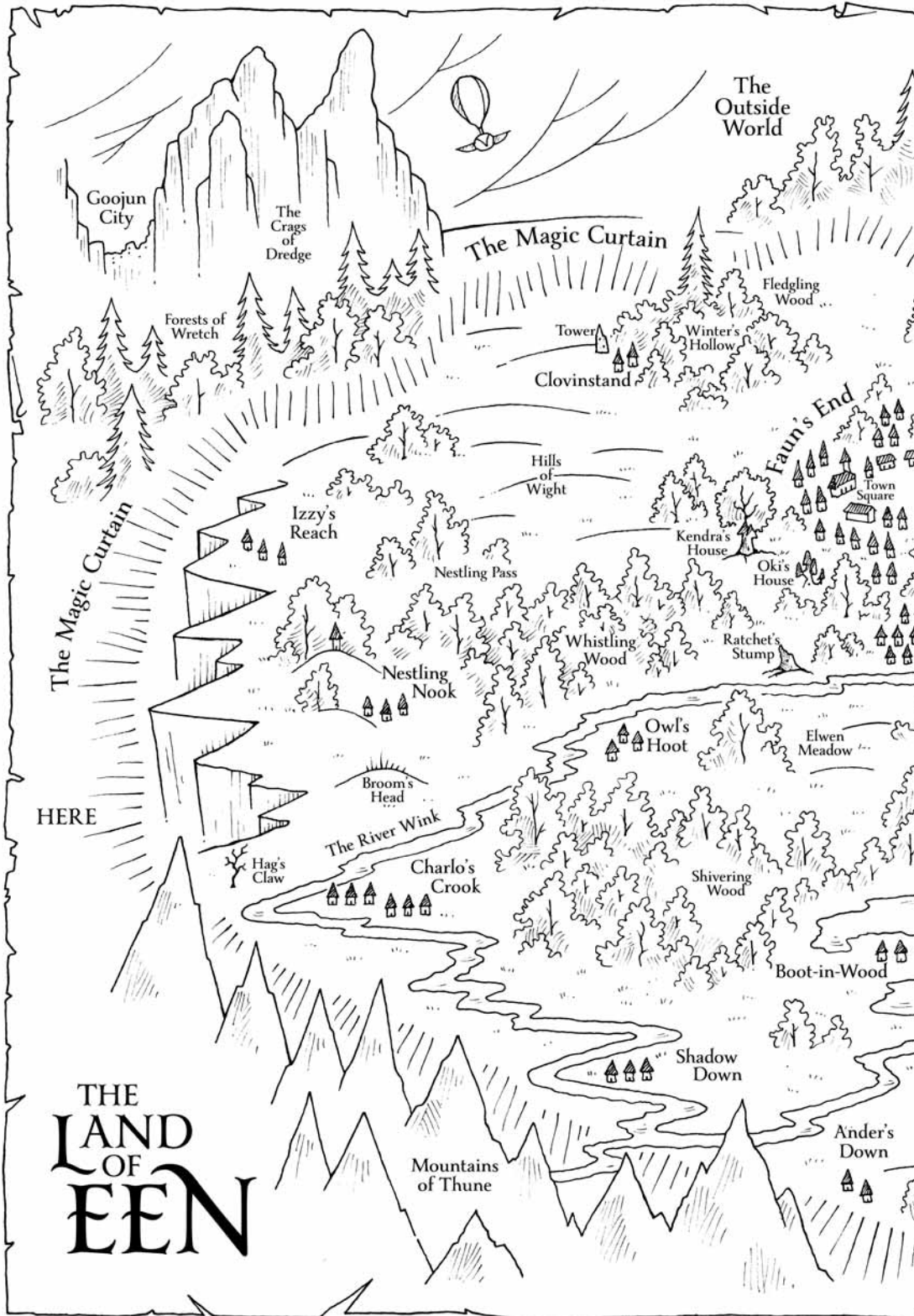


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The Outside World

Goojun City

The Crags of Dredge

The Magic Curtain

Forests of Wretch

Tower

Fledgling Wood ...

Winter's Hollow

Clovinstand

The Magic Curtain

Izzy's Reach

Hills of Wight

Faun's End

Town Square

Kendra's House

Oki's House

Nestling Pass

Whistling Wood

Ratchet's Stump

Nestling Nook

Owl's Hoot

Elwen Meadow

HERE

Broom's Head

The River Wink

Charlo's Crook

Hag's Claw

Shivering Wood

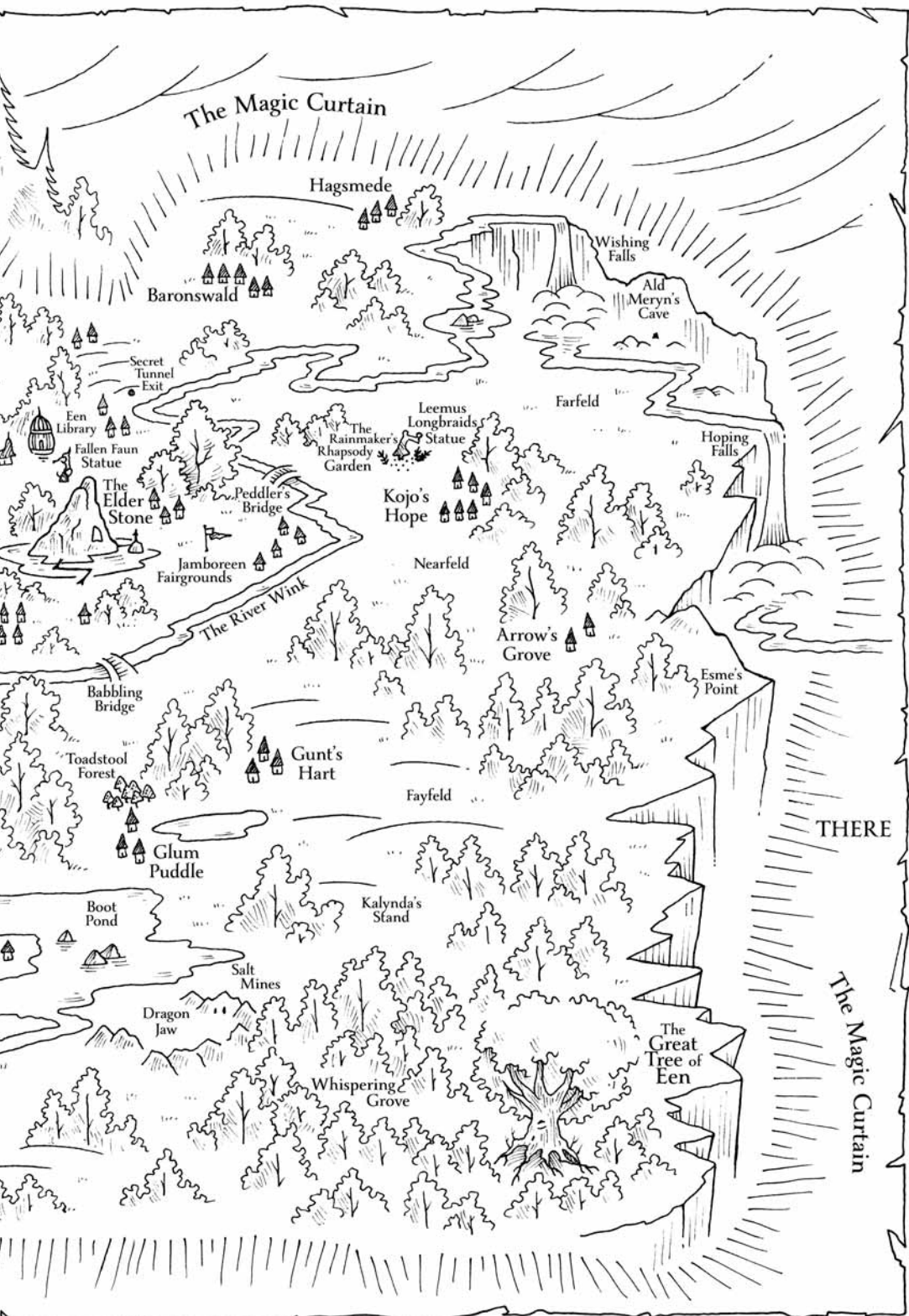
Boot-in-Wood

Shadow Down

THE LAND OF EEN

Mountains of Thune

Ander's Down



The Magic Curtain

Hagsmede

Baronswald

Wishing Falls

Ald Meryn's Cave

Secret Tunnel Exit

Farfeld

Een Library

Fallen Faun Statue

The Rainmaker's Rhapsody Garden

Leemus Longbraids Statue

Hoping Falls

The Elder Stone

Peddler's Bridge

Kojo's Hope

Nearfeld

Jamboreen Fairgrounds

The River Wink

Arrow's Grove

Esmes Point

Babbling Bridge

Gunt's Hart

Fayfeld

Toadstool Forest

Glum Puddle

Boot Pond

Kalynda's Stand

THERE

Salt Mines

Dragon Jaw

Whispering Grove

The Great Tree of Een

The Magic Curtain

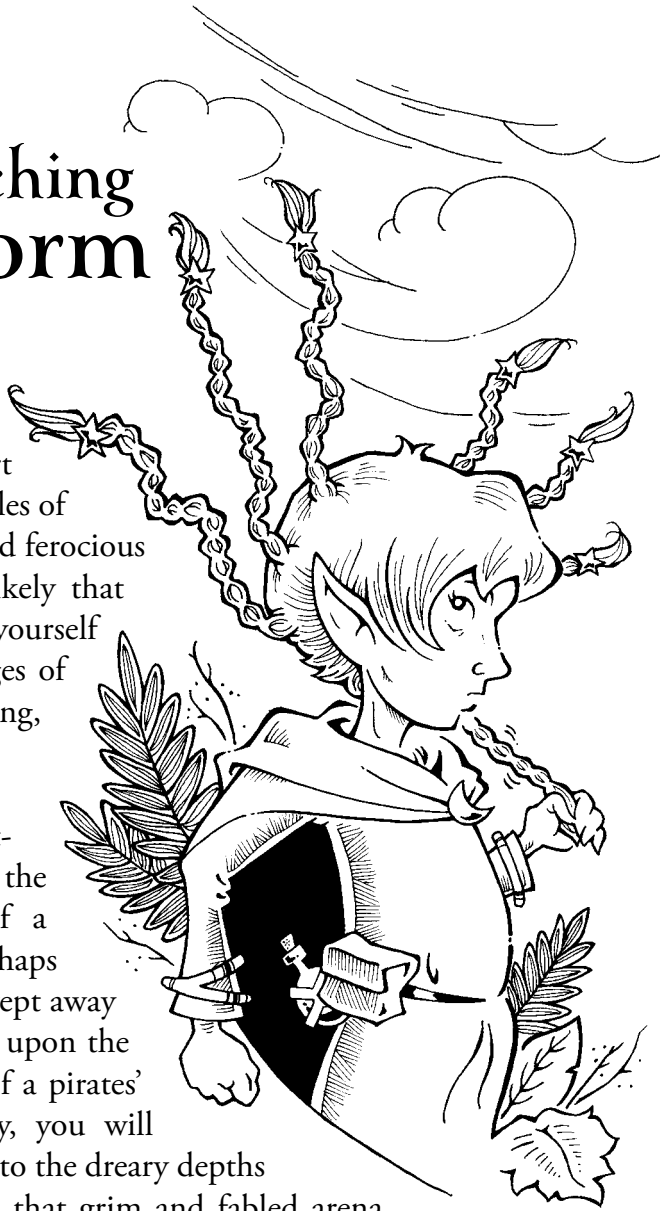


CHAPTER 1

The Approaching Storm

If you are the sort who likes to read tales of grand adventure and ferocious battle, then it is likely that you will soon find yourself lost within the pages of this book. Before long, you will discover yourself entangled in a loud and riotous brawl inside the smoky innards of a gnomes' tavern. Perhaps you will even be swept away in a dramatic clash upon the sea-washed decks of a pirates' galley. Or, possibly, you will find yourself cast into the dreary depths of the Rumble Pit, that grim and fabled arena where many an unlucky traveler has arrived after a treacherous voyage across the Seas of Ire.

Here, in the doomed light of the Rumble Pit, all manner of creatures will collide in a raucous contest for survival. Here



you will find fauns and centaurs, dwarves and dragons, giants and unicorns. Here, hooked claws will shred the mightiest shield, needle-like fangs will snap through armor of leather and steel, and heavy hooves will pound the earth until it is as hard and unrelenting as a warlock's curse.

And yet, the most ferocious battle in this book will not be waged in this dark and dangerous pit of despair. Indeed, it will be fought somewhere far more hidden: deep within the heart of a girl. You have probably already guessed this girl's name, for it is none other than Kendra Kandlestar, that brave and steadfast heroine from the secret Land of Een. The Eens, of course, are a race that has existed since ancient times, when the earth still remembered some of its magic. Some say that Eens are related to elves, for they are a small people with pointed ears and the ability to talk to animals, but I have also heard that they are a unique race, unlike any other.

In any case, if you have heard anything about Eens, then you know that they are a people unaccustomed to battles. They have always kept to themselves, tucked between the cracks of Here and There in the tiny Land of Een, which is protected from the outside world by an invisible magic curtain. And yet, Kendra has never been like the rest of her people. She has had her share of journeys, her share of adventures—and now she will have her share of battles. Her grave struggle does not begin in the gnomes' tavern, or on the pirates' galley, or even in the Rumble Pit—for you see, battles in the heart begin long before you ever realize it, grumbling and groaning quietly until at last, like a beast, they show their hungry claws. And so, now you ask, where does Kendra's battle begin?

The answer is this: on a quiet afternoon, in a quiet grove, deep within the quiet Land of Een. This grove was so sacred,

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so hidden, that only the eldest of Eens knew of its existence, and yet here was Kendra, stepping lightly across the mossy ground and listening to the strange murmurings that surrounded her.

She gave one of her braids a nervous tug and gazed up at the immense trees that towered above her. Was it the wind she was hearing? She listened more closely and tugged on her braids again. Tugging helped her think; thankfully, she had seven braids to choose from, all of which reached out from her head like the rays of a star. And, pulling on these braids, Kendra decided that the murmuring sound in the grove didn't come from the wind rustling these grand trees. It was something else. It was as if the grove itself was speaking. It was as if it was somehow *alive*.

"How peculiar," she said out loud.

"Humph," came a grunt from the old Een who was walking just ahead of her. "Let us hold our tongues."

Kendra nodded, but the old man did not even look back at her. He hobbled onward through the grove, huffing with effort. He had large pointed ears, a head as bald as a mushroom, and a hunched body—though it was hard to get any sense of his figure at all, for he had a beard so long and white that it kept most of him hidden away.

The name of this peculiar Een was Gregor Griffinskitch, and he was Kendra's uncle. He was also one of the greatest wizards in all the Land of Een, though at the moment he was without his most important magical item: his wooden staff. Normally, Uncle Griffinskitch would not even leave the house without his staff, for it was as much a part of him as his beard. But this wand of magic had been destroyed on his last adventure in the outside world, and it was for this reason, Kendra

knew, that her uncle had journeyed to the mystical grove. Here, the old wizard hoped to procure a new staff. What Kendra didn't understand was why *she* had been brought along.

Presently, a gigantic tree came into view. It stood at the end of the enchanted grove, a king commanding the rest of the forest. It was of unimaginable size, looming before her like a colossal wooden giant. The tree's roots stretched out like a spider's web, clutching at the earth with long, twisted tendrils, while its trunk jutted crookedly towards the sky in a tangle of twisted branches. Its bark was gray and rough, blemished with knots and patches of moss.

It was an ancient tree, Kendra realized, perhaps the oldest in all the Land of Een. Then, as she and her uncle approached the mighty oak, the entire grove filled with a golden light and the murmuring grew louder, until at last it became a clear and steady voice.

"Who enters my hallowed bliss? Who are you? What Een is this?"

With a start, Kendra realized that it was the tree that had spoken. Uncle Griffinskitch, however, betrayed no surprise. He knelt before the tree (Kendra hastily followed his lead) and declared, "It is I, Gregor Griffinskitch, Wizard of Een."

"Ah, we meet again, Whiskers of White," the tree said in a slow and ponderous tone. "Tell me, why do you seek my magical might?"

"I come to humbly request a new branch of Eenwood."

Kendra glanced at her uncle. She had never heard him speak with such reverence.

"Rare is the Een who asks this twice," the tree said gravely. "Tell me, friend, you had a wand; did it not suffice?"



“My wand has been destroyed,” Uncle Griffinskitch replied.

The tree seemed to consider this information for a moment. Then it said, “The loss of a wand, a grave shame; tell me, was it lost with noble aim?”

“Aye, in the quest for my family,” the old wizard murmured.

“Of Kayla Kandlestar, your sister, you speak,” the tree crackled. “Long ago, she was lost, a situation bleak.”

“Aye,” Uncle Griffinskitch said solemnly.

Kendra gave her braids another tug; the tree was speaking of her own mother. She had disappeared—along with Kendra’s father and brother—long ago, when Kendra was just a baby.

“So the magic curtain you did cross,” the tree stated. “And did you find those poor souls lost?”

“Only my nephew, Kiro,” Uncle Griffinskitch replied. “But he was transformed by an enchantment into the monstrous form of an Unger. He may be an Unger yet, for we lost him again before we could bring him home to Een.”

Atop its heavy beard of gray roots, the tree murmured quietly to itself, as if in deep thought. Kendra stirred uncomfortably. Then at last, the great oak spoke again. “Rise, old master. This way hark; come, place your hand upon my bark.”

With a grunt, Uncle Griffinskitch rose and touched his frail hand to the trunk. Kendra locked her eyes upon this magical scene, her mind wrought with curiosity. For a moment, the old wizard and the tree seemed one, bound together in some enchanted exchange.

All at once, a tiny twig sprouted forth between Uncle Griffinskitch’s fingers. The branch grew quickly, with magic life, twisting and turning until it was the size and shape of the wizard’s previous staff. With a gentle snap, Uncle Griffinskitch plucked the staff and held it in his hands.

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“Your magic wisdom this wand does know,” the tree said with satisfaction. “To match your skill, the wood did grow.”

“My humble gratitude,” Uncle Griffinskitch said with a slight bow of his head.

Then the tree spoke again. “And now tell me, my magic throve, who else do you bring to the sacred grove?”

“My niece,” Uncle Griffinskitch replied.

“This child I have seen from afar; she is the daughter of Kayla Kandlestar?”

“The same.”

“Many years have passed since my bark young Kayla did seek,” the tree intoned. “And yet, to these old rings, it feels the mere passing of a week. A powerful sorceress was Kayla in her youth. She sought ancient wisdom and secret truth.”

Kendra’s ears prickled as the tree spoke, relishing every word. Her uncle spoke so rarely of her mother that any morsel of information was like a great feast to the Een girl.

“And now here before me is this child; why do you bring her here, into the wild?” the tree asked.

“She has turned twelve years of age,” Uncle Griffinskitch replied. “It is the way of Eens that each child of twelve should have a master and learn a craft.”

“Your apprentice you ask her to be,” the tree guessed. “You wish her to know the art of wizardry?”

“Aye,” Uncle Griffinskitch replied—and Kendra gave one of her braids such a furious tug that it caused her eyes to tear. Her uncle had never mentioned anything to *her* about becoming his apprentice! Like a waterfall, a torrent of thoughts began to tumble through her mind.

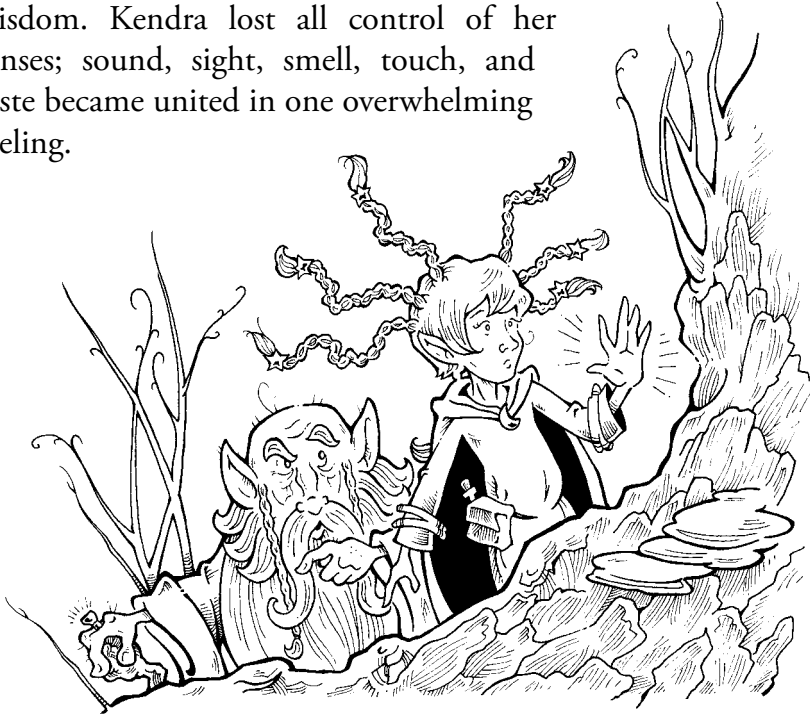
“To study magic is a great ambition, a sacred art,” the tree declared, rustling its leaves fervently. “One must be of

stern mind and know a steady heart. What character does the daughter of Kandlestar possess? Wisdom, patience, courage: can these qualities she address?”

“Indeed,” Uncle Griffinskitch uttered.

The tree beckoned Kendra with a branch. “Then rise, child, and do approach; let us together this matter broach.”

She did not need to be asked twice. Quickly, Kendra scrambled to the base of the tree. She placed her hand upon its bark—and in that instant, an electrifying sensation surged down her arm and rushed through her whole body. It was as if someone had opened a door inside of her that had previously been closed; in that brief exchange, she felt a jumble of images and emotions flood her mind and heart. It was as if the tree was showing her a glimpse of all its worldly wisdom. Kendra lost all control of her senses; sound, sight, smell, touch, and taste became united in one overwhelming feeling.



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And then it was over. Kendra blinked, as if regaining consciousness, and in her hand she was holding a tiny twig of Eenwood. She gazed upon it with wonder. Compared to her uncle's staff, hers seemed small and insignificant.

The tree seemed to read her thoughts. "Inside your heart, magic may sow; as it flourishes, your wand will grow."

"Th-thank you," Kendra said nervously. She clutched the wood tightly and—for the briefest of moments—felt a tiny spark of energy inflame her palm. But the feeling was soon gone. She wondered if it would return; perhaps it would grow with the wood. After her experience with the great tree, touching the wand was almost . . . disappointing.

Once again, the tree seemed to know her mind. It spoke again, this time addressing Kendra's uncle.

"Watch this child, for this I tell: I have seen inside her heart, heard its knell. Like a nest of wasps, it throbs and hums, beating like a thousand drums. I have felt her memories and her triumphs seen; she found the Box of Whispers for all of Een. She discovered the wretched Door to Unger, bringing to an end its wicked hunger. Full of passion and steel is she, but beware her impatience; this is the key."

Kendra's mind swirled. It sounded as if the tree doubted her. Well, she would prove herself! She would become a terrific sorceress—maybe as skilled as her mother. Maybe better.

"Your mind flutters and flitters like a dryad's dance," the great tree said to Kendra. "Are my words so piercing, a mighty lance?"

"N-no," Kendra replied, somewhat hotly.

"A storm approaches, fierce and riled. It will surely roar—beware it, child."

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“What do you mean?” Kendra asked boldly. “Is it some kind of danger? A monster? A dragon?”

“More perilous, more wicked, I do fear. Its power is dark, and it draws ever near.”

“Where is it?” Kendra urged. “Tell me; I will watch for it.”

“Child, you cannot—for this I speak true,” the tree replied in earnest. “The storm I speak of brews in *you*.”

