



**Series:** The Ocean Fairies

**Book:** Stephanie the Starfish Fairy

### **Starry Skies**

"The sea sounds so much louder at night, doesn't it?" Kirsty Tate said to her best friend Rachel Walker as they made their way down to Leamouth beach in darkness.

The stars twinkled in the sky above them, and there was a full moon which cast silvery streaks on the tops of the waves.

"It feels completely different down here," Rachel agreed. "No noisy seagulls, no ice-cream van, no families making sandcastles..."

Kirsty smiled. "It's exciting," she said, hugging herself to keep warm as a cool breeze swept in from the sea. "Just like everything else about this holiday, really!"

Both girls were staying with Kirsty's gran for a week of the spring holidays, and Kirsty wasn't exaggerating when she said they'd been having an exciting time.

The two friends had been helping the Ocean Fairies look for the seven missing pieces of a magical golden conch shell which had been smashed by mean Jack Frost.

So far, they'd found four pieces of the shell and had four wonderful fairy adventures, but there were still three pieces left to find.

Tonight they'd been invited to join Gran's Astronomy Club for an evening picnic on the beach. The forecast was for a beautifully clear night, so Gran and her friends had brought down trestle tables and picnic hampers to the beach, as well as some impressive-looking telescopes, too.

Kirsty and Rachel helped set the food out as the guests arrived and then, as the sky grew darker still, Gran showed them some of the constellations. "There are eighty-

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eight constellations – or ‘groups of stars’,” she told the girls, and pointed upwards. “There’s an easy one – the Great Bear or, as we used to call it when I was a girl, the Saucepan. Do you see the shape of a saucepan up there?”

Rachel and Kirsty stared at where she was pointing. “Yes!” Rachel cried excitedly. “I see it. There’s a handle, and there’s the pan.”

“Oh yes!” Kirsty said, gazing up.

“Well, the ‘saucepan’ is part of the Great Bear,” Gran explained. “The handle is the bear’s tail, and the ‘pan’ is part of the bear’s body. If you look carefully, you can see legs and a head shape, too.” She smiled at the girls through the darkness. “It’s a bit like joining up the dots to make a picture.”

While Gran passed around cups of coffee from her thermos, Kirsty and Rachel continued to stare at the stars, trying to spot more pictures. “I can see a violin shape,” Rachel said, showing Kirsty. “It’s just like Victoria the Violin Fairy’s.”

“Oh yes,” Kirsty said. “And there’s a shoe shape, with ribbons attached, like Ruby the Red Fairy’s shoe!”

An excited clamour went up amongst the Astronomy Club members at that moment, and the girls saw that some of them were pointing at the sky. “A shooting star!” Gran exclaimed. “Well, I never. That’s very special. Make a wish, girls!”

“I wish we could meet another Ocean Fairy soon,” Rachel murmured at once.

Kirsty heard her. “That’s what I wished for too,” she whispered. “We must find the other pieces of the Magical Golden Conch Shell. We’ve only got two days left here in Leamouth and there are still three pieces missing!”

The Magical Golden Conch Shell was very important. Every year at a grand ocean-side gala, Shannon the Ocean Fairy would play a special tune on the shell, and this would ensure order throughout the world’s oceans. Before she’d been able to play the tune this year, though, Jack Frost had sent his goblin servants to snatch the

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conch shell from her. He said he hated the seaside as it was far too warm and noisy and he didn't see why anyone else should have fun there.

Unfortunately the goblins had begun fighting over who got to carry the shell and then dropped it, smashing it into seven pieces as they did so. The Ocean Fairies had all tried to grab the broken pieces, but before they could reach them, Jack Frost had cast a spell, sending the shattered shell fragments into the human world, before vanishing.

The Fairy Queen had used her magic to send the Ocean Fairies' special animal helpers out into the oceans to each guard a piece of the broken conch shell. Kirsty and Rachel had been helping the Ocean Fairies find their animal friends, who had led them each time to another piece of the shell. But Jack Frost's sneaky goblins were looking for the shell pieces too – and were desperate to please their master by finding them first.

Down fell the shooting star now, past the constellations that looked like Victoria's violin and Ruby's shoe. "Here, girls," came a voice just then. It was one of Gran's friends, a nice old man called Frank. "Would you like to watch the shooting star through this telescope? You'll be able to see it more clearly."

"Yes, please," said Rachel, putting her eye to the telescope. Then she stiffened with excitement as she saw the shooting star, now magnified. Only...it wasn't actually a shooting star at all. It was Stephanie the Starfish Fairy!

**Read the rest of *Stephanie the Starfish Fairy* and discover what magic happens next!**

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