

Sarah ✨ MLYNOWSKI ✨ MYRACLE ✨ Emily ✨ JENKINS

UPSIDE ✨ DOWN MAGIC

DRAGON
OVERNIGHT

In a new place,
you can find all kinds
of new friends.



UPSIDE★DOWN MAGIC

DRAGON OVERNIGHT

by

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and

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*For everyone who has ever wanted to be a dritten.
Or a skunkephant.*

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1

Zamboozle! No school for three days!”
Nory Horace bounced and flung her arms over her head. It was a crisp November morning. She had her favorite purple rain boots on, even though it wasn’t raining. Her poufy hair was squashed beneath a knitted cap.

The Dunwiddle Magic School parking lot was full of families dropping off their kids. Duffel bags and backpacks were piled by the cheerful blue field-trip bus.

Aunt Margo hugged Nory good-bye. Nory’s aunt

was sturdy, pale-skinned, and practical, whereas Nory was wiry, dark-skinned, and lively. "It's a *school* trip," Aunt Margo said. "That's still school."

"Not to me." Nory wiggled out of the hug and started bouncing again. "No math! No poetry analysis! No interpretive dance! And we're going to see *dragons!*"

"Not just see them, *take care of them,*" added Marigold Ramos. Marigold was one of Nory's school friends, but not a best friend. She had long dark hair, a leather jacket, woolly yellow gloves, and a warm smile.

"Do you think we'll get to feed them?" Nory asked. "Or pet them? Or ride them? Or cut their toenails? I'd wouldn't mind cutting some dragon toenails. Really, I wouldn't."

"The dragons don't need manicures. They need rehabilitation," said Aunt Margo. "They're in Dragon Haven because they're injured and can't survive in the wild."

"I know," said Nory. "But some will get better and return to their natural habitat, right?"

Aunt Margo nodded. "Yes. And others will live in the wildlife center for good."

"Do you think we can walk them on leashes?" asked Marigold. "Just the little ones, I mean. Not the big ones."

Aunt Margo shook her head, laughing. "I should go. I have a client." She hugged Nory once more. "I'm going to miss you."

Nory grinned. "I'll be too busy petting dragons to be homesick."

"Just don't bring any of them home with you. They're cute when they're little, but they take up *a lot* of room when they're older!" With one last smile, Aunt Margo wrapped her scarf around her neck, tilted herself into flying position, and took off to pick up the latest passenger for her flying taxi service.

Flying was one of the five types of typical magic. Then there were Flares, Fluxers, Fuzzies, and Flickers.

Flyers flew.

Flares worked with fire and heat.

Fluxers could turn themselves into animals.

Fuzzies could talk to and connect with animals.

Flickers could turn invisible or make other things invisible.

But not everybody *had* typical magic that could be neatly described by a word starting with *F*. Nory didn't, and neither did Marigold. Marigold shrank things and couldn't make them big again. Nory was an Upside-Down Fluxer.

When Nory had turned ten, her magic had bubbled up, like everyone's did. But her magic had turned out to be . . . unusual. She didn't flux into everyday animals like kittens, dogs, and goats. Instead, she turned into mixed-up animals. A puppy with squid legs, for example. A squippy! Or a kitten mixed with a dragon—a dritten!

Nory's father, Dr. Stone Horace, was the headmaster of a fancy private magic school called Sage Academy. It was one of the best schools in the country. Nory's older brother and sister went there.

But Nory had flunked the Sage Academy admissions test.

Father had been very, very disappointed in her. That was why he had sent her to live with Aunt Margo. Aunt Margo lived near Dunwiddle Magic School, a public school where an experimental Upside-Down Magic class had just started up. Nory was enrolled there.

Nory's teacher, Ms. Starr, turned out to be awesome. And there were only seven other fifth-grade kids in the Upside-Down Magic class, so everybody got a lot of individual attention.

In the parking lot, Elliott Cohen and Pepper Phan came over to Nory and Marigold. Elliott was Nory's best friend. He was an Upside-Down Flare. He froze things instead of heating them.

Pepper was Nory's other best friend. Pepper was tiny, especially in her enormous puffy coat. She had come to see them off, since she wasn't going on the trip. The Dragon Haven people thought her magic posed too much of a risk. Pepper was a Fierce, which was a rare kind of Upside-Down Fuzzy. If a typical Fuzzy met a scurry of squirrels, her animal magic

would get them eating peanuts out of her hand in no time. But instead of charming animals, Pepper frightened them. Squirrels squinted their tiny eyes and ran away. Hedgehogs dove into holes. Chickadees pooped in terror.

“I still can’t believe you’re not coming,” Nory said.

“I just can’t,” Pepper said. “If I fierced an injured dragon, it could hurt itself more. If I fierced a flying dragon, it could escape.”

Nory pouted. “I know. But it’s so unfair!”

Pepper shrugged. “Anyway, I get the days off from school. Have double fun for me, all right?” Pepper gave Nory such a quick hug that Nory didn’t have time to hug her back. Then she was gone.

Nory, Marigold, and Elliott were silent and solemn for a moment. Then Nory forced herself to look on the bright side. “Do you think we’ll get to stay up super late?” she asked her friends.

“The boys’ cabin is planning ghost stories one night,” said Elliott, nodding.

“We’ll get to see Ms. Starr in her pajamas!”

Nory said to Marigold. “What kind do you think she wears?”

“Hot pink,” said Elliott.

“Candy-apple red,” said Marigold.

Ms. Starr always wore bright colors. Here she came now, in blue jeans, bright green sneakers, and an electric-orange jacket that looked great against her dark skin. Above her floated Andres Padillo on a leash.

Andres was an Upside-Down Flyer. Like typical Flyers, he could fly, but he went a lot higher than other Flyers his age. The upside-down part was that he couldn't *stop* flying.

At all.

Half the time, Andres wore a backpack full of bricks to make sure he didn't float off into the sky. Right now, his brickpack was being carried by Nurse Riley, the school nurse, who was coming on the field trip as a second chaperone. Today was the first time Nory had seen him out of his scrubs. He wore cargo pants and a brown woolly sweater. He looked tough,

Nory thought. Like a mountain man instead of a tenderhearted goof who doled out cough drops and Band-Aids.

Nurse Riley nodded at Ms. Starr and heaved Andres's brickpack over his shoulder. He made it halfway to the luggage compartment of the bus before dropping the pack and bracing his hands against his legs. "Wow, that's heavy," he muttered.

"We should help Nurse Riley load the bags," Nory declared.

She, Marigold, and Elliott formed an assembly line, passing bags from one person to the next until they reached Nurse Riley. He arranged everything in the storage compartment under the bus.

Sebastian joined them. As usual, he was dressed a little formally, as if he were going to a tea party instead of a wildlife refuge. He had pale skin and bright red cheeks, and he wore a cone around his head, the kind dogs wore after having surgery.

Sebastian was an Upside-Down Flicker. Typical Flickers could make themselves or other things

invisible. Sebastian, on the other hand, could see invisible things, like sound waves. Music was beautiful, he told the others, with intricate patterns. But big crowds and upset tempers hurt his eyes and gave him headaches.

That's why he wore his cone when it was going to be a noisy trip. It blocked out some, though not all, of the sound waves that bothered him.

Finally, it was time to go. They had an entire school bus to themselves. Nory skipped to the last row and Elliott sat down beside her. She leaned back against the vinyl seat. Her stomach felt fizzy with excitement, and she wondered if it was possible for a person to feel her own eyes sparkling.

She turned to her left. "Hey, Elliott—are my eyes sparkling?"

"Huh?"

"Never mind," Nory said. She was sure they were.