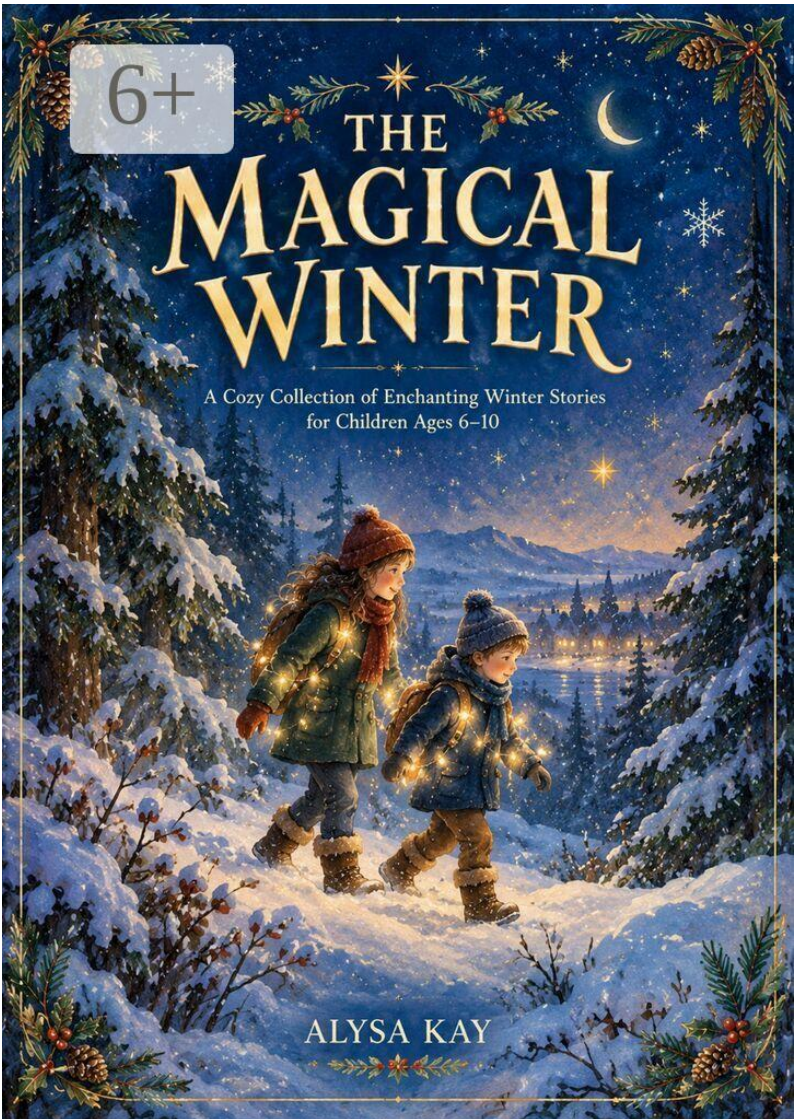

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THE
MAGICAL
WINTER
A Cozy Collection of Enchanting Winter Stories
for Children Ages 6–10
ALYSA KAY

Alysa Kay
The Magical Winter

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Аннотация

What if a little magic could turn an ordinary winter into an extraordinary adventure?

The Magical Winter is an enchanting collection of six fairy tales filled with whimsical creatures, hidden desires, family love, and holiday wonder. Follow mysterious fairy lights, discover a gnome's secret, step into Martha's magic shop to uncover your desire, and taste an enchanted apple pie!

Includes a playful New Year's alphabet.

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The Magical Winter

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DEDICATED TO MY
FAMILY, WHOSE LOVE
IS AS VAST AS THE
WHOLE WORLD

A Silly New Year's alphabet

A — Amber scents drifted through the room.
B — Brightly, the guests laughed.
C — Candles flickered beside the tree.
D — Down the chimney came the winter cheer.
E — Every corner sparkled.
F — Frost painted the windows.
G — Gifts appeared beneath the tree.
H — Holly leaves swayed in the breeze.
I — Icy stars glittered overhead.
J — Jolly jokes made everyone laugh.
K — Kittens curled up by the fire.
L — Lanterns glowed in the snow.
M — Midnight magic filled the air.
N — Night wrapped the house in silver.
O — Old flames danced in the hearth.
P — Pretty snowflakes decorated the windows.
Q — Quiet wishes waited for midnight.
R — Red ribbons shimmered.
S — Snowflakes softly dressed the streets.
T — Tiny lights warmed the darkness.
U — Under the tree, surprises waited.
V — Velvet ribbons gleamed.
W — Winter whispered its secrets.

X — X marks the spot where a little magic may hide.
Y — Yuletide laughter filled the room.
Z — Zest and joy welcomed the New Year.

The Cat, the Gnome and the Ring

Dad pulled a tiny ring from his pocket. His daughter, Lyra, stared at it in breathless silence, afraid even to touch it. It was the most beautiful ring she had ever seen. As Dad held it out, she leaned closer to examine the rainbow-colored stone at its center. A mysterious light shimmered deep inside it.

"Lyra, do you know what kind of stone this is?" Dad asked, studying the intricate patterns beside her.

"No. Tell me, Dad! It's so beautiful," she whispered, her eyes shining with wonder.

"It's an opal. But not just any opal — a magical one. See how all the colors of the rainbow shimmer when I turn it in the light?"

"Yes, I see!" Lyra replied. She was so captivated that she could hardly look away from the glowing stone.

"There's a whole hidden world inside this stone — a world no outsider can see. It's home to a land of little gnomes. They'll help anyone who wears this ring."

"Can I put it on?" Lyra asked, her mouth falling open in amazement.

"Of course, sweetheart. May this ring bring a little magic to everything you do." Dad gently slipped it onto her index finger. "Speaking of things to do, your mother and I will need your help cleaning tomorrow. But today, we have to tidy up before our guests and Father Yule arrive. Deal?"

"Deal," Lyra replied reluctantly. Cleaning was her least favorite thing in the world.

"Just your toys, sweetheart. The little gnomes inside the ring will surely help you. Your mother and I will take care of the rest of the house and prepare the holiday treats. All right?" Dad smiled as Lyra proudly admired the shimmering gem — her very first piece of jewelry.

The rest of the day passed in a happy blur of games and laughter. Before bed, Lyra lay beneath her blankets, turning the ring around her finger. She couldn't take her eyes off the glowing stone as she dreamed of the tiny world hidden inside it.

At the foot of the bed, her chubby cat, Pixie, ran in frantic circles, pouncing and swatting at the air as though chasing something invisible to human eyes.

"When is she finally going to fall asleep? I want to play!" Pixie grumbled, thumping a fluffy paw onto the carpet.

With a soft *poof*, colorful sparkles spilled from beneath her paw, and a tiny gnome appeared.

"Hey! Let go of me!" he squeaked.

Pixie instantly pounced, squeezing him in a tight hug until only his little head, topped with a pointed cap, peeked out between her paws.

"We gnomes weren't invited here just to be your toys! Let me go, let me go!" The little man wriggled and squirmed, but Pixie ignored his protests and purred even louder.

"But you're so sweet, and you smell just like caramel," she

purred. “I don’t think it’ll be long now…”

The cat stared down at the gnome, barely able to contain her excitement during this forced moment of quiet before she could finally play with the abandoned toys.

“There! She’s asleep! Hooray!” Pixie rejoiced when Lyra’s breathing grew slow and deep.

She released the gnome and immediately began trotting through the sea of scattered blocks.

All through the night, Pixie played wildly with Lyra’s toys. She tried not to knock over the elaborate building sets, but time and again, they came crashing down. Their sharp plastic corners dug into her pink paws. Seeking safety, Pixie scrambled into Lyra’s wooden dollhouse and eyed a regiment of plastic toy soldiers with long swords.

The little gnome watched the cat’s midnight chaos from a distance and sighed. He knew there would be a tremendous amount of tidying to do once the girl woke up.

The winter night passed quickly — especially for Lyra, who slept soundly, unaware that her precious ring had slipped away while she dreamed.

She woke before sunrise and padded across the cold floor to open the curtains. Outside, the world was breathtaking. Great, fluffy snowflakes drifted down, covering everything in a fresh blanket of white.

But as Lyra reached toward the window, her heart stopped. She looked at her hand.

The ring was gone!

Frightened, she began searching the room. In her haste, she nearly tripped over a toy car, and sharp pieces from a building set poked painfully into her bare feet. A heavy ache of loss rose in her throat, and she burst into tears, rubbing her eyes with her fists.

"Dad just gave it to me… and the little gnomes are inside… Where is it?" she sobbed.

She lowered her hands and saw Pixie fast asleep, curled up on a large plush teddy bear that had somehow fallen onto the floor.

Lyra rushed over and gently stroked the cat to wake her.

"Pixie, where's my ring? Did you see it?" she cried.

Just then, the bedroom door creaked open, and Dad walked in.

"Lyra, what happened? Why are you crying, sweetheart?" he asked, still rubbing the sleep from his eyes.

"Nothing, Dad. I'm fine. I just stepped on a sharp toy car. It hurt," she said quickly.

"Are you sure you're all right?" Dad asked, looking worriedly at the sea of toys around her feet. "Well, if you're okay, I'll go start breakfast. I want to surprise your mother. Get dressed and come to the kitchen. You and I can make her favorite pancakes together."

"Okay. I'll get ready quickly," Lyra whispered.

She kept her hands hidden behind her back. She couldn't bring herself to tell her father that she had lost the most precious thing in the world to her.

Dad smiled and closed the door. The moment it clicked shut, Lyra's heart began pounding so hard she thought it might leap right out of her chest.

"Pixie, please. Do you know where my ring is?" she begged, fresh tears welling in her eyes.

Pixie gazed sleepily up at the girl, then casually slapped a paw against the rug. Instantly, the caramel-scented gnome appeared beside her.

"Can she see you yet?" the cat purred, tilting her head.

"No," the gnome replied. "She hasn't asked me for help yet. But you can help her find the ring. Once she finds it, she'll believe — and then she'll be able to see me, too."

"Where is it? Show me," Pixie purred, leaning into Lyra's hand as the girl stroked her fur, unaware of the rainbow-colored gnome standing right in front of them.

"The ring was a little too big for her finger, so it slipped off while she was sleeping," the gnome explained. "It's hidden right under her pillow. You have to find a way to show her, Pixie."

With a brilliant flash of glitter, the gnome vanished in a cloud of sparks.

The cat let out a loud meow and raced around the room, deliberately knocking things over to get Lyra's attention. Pixie dashed toward the bed and tried to jump up, but her heavy, fluffy belly got in the way. She slid back onto the carpet.

Undeterred, she tried again, only to roll onto her side with an indignant meow. But Pixie was a brave, determined cat — even

if she rarely chose to show it to humans.

On her third attempt, she dug her claws into the heavy winter blanket, hauled herself up, and landed with a soft *plop* on the pillow.

Lyra came over and began stroking her. She could tell Pixie was trying to communicate something important, so she watched closely. But when she looked at the bed, she saw nothing unusual.

Suddenly, Pixie dug her hind paws into the fabric and sprang back down to the floor. Her leap flipped the heavy pillow over — and there, gleaming in the morning light, lay the missing opal ring.

"My ring! Pixie, you found it!" Lyra gasped.

She slipped the ring back onto her finger and scooped her plump cat into a grateful hug. Pixie purred with pure, rumbling delight.

Lyra gazed at the ring in wonder. Then she looked at the messy floor, and the promise she had made to her father came back to her.

"I can't leave this mess. I've already lied to Dad once today," she whispered. "I have to clean it up. Pixie… do you think the little gnomes will really help me?"

Inspired by the return of her treasure, Lyra resolved to face her chores.

At once, the ring began to sparkle with a warm, brilliant light. Golden glitter showered onto the carpet, and a tiny boy appeared in a burst of sparks. He wore a bright rainbow cap and a matching

suit.

"Hello, Lyra! Where shall we begin?" the gnome asked, tipping his hat.

Surprised and delighted, Lyra pointed her ring-bearing finger at the mountain of toys scattered across the room. The little gnome took off his cap, surveyed the enormous mess, and let out a dramatic little sigh.

"Well… let's get started!" he squeaked, breaking into a bright smile.

And so the little girl, the chubby cat, and the rainbow gnome worked together to conquer the mess. By the time the pancakes were ready, the room was spotless.

That New Year's Eve, Lyra learned that almost any burden feels lighter when you have friends who believe in magic.

The Fairy Lights

"Hooray! Today is New Year's Eve!" Sasha and Sofia shouted in unison as they burst into the living room, their faces glowing with excitement.

"Grandma, when will Mom and Dad get home from work? They promised they'd be back early," little Sasha asked, bouncing on his heels.

"Very soon, my dear. In about half an hour," Grandma replied gently. She sat beside the crackling fireplace in her favorite rocking chair, her knitting needles clicking softly as she worked on a pair of tiny red woolen socks. "Get dressed, and then we'll go out to meet them."

The brother and sister dashed around the grand Yule tree. It stood tall in the corner, covered in sparkling glass ornaments that caught the warm firelight. Every corner of the room was filled with the delicious anticipation of the wonderful moment when Father Yule would arrive.

Outside the window, a winter wonderland was unfolding. Snow swept fiercely across the landscape, burying the roads beneath a thick, fluffy blanket. But the children were undeterred. They had already brought their sled to the front door, ready to ride the moment their parents stepped through the gate.

Yet, as the minutes ticked by, the road outside remained empty. Even Grandma began glancing worriedly toward the

window.

"Sasha, Sofia, your parents must be delayed because of the snowstorm, but they should be here soon," Grandma said, trying to reassure the children as they pressed their noses against the cold glass, searching for headlights. "Let's have lunch while we wait. I'll set the table."

Over warm spoonfuls of soup, the children chatted excitedly about how their favorite holiday would unfold. Suddenly, the unmistakable crunch of heavy footsteps in the snow echoed from the porch.

"They're back!" Sofia cried, jumping up so quickly that her chair nearly tipped over. She dashed toward the front door.

"Phew! What a blizzard! It took us nearly three hours just to cross the valley," Dad gasped, stamping the snow off his boots and unwinding his thick woolen scarf.

"Never mind the storm. The important thing is that we made it home," Mom said, a tired but radiant smile spreading across her face as she knelt to hug both children tightly.

"We've been waiting so long for you," Grandma said, coming out of the kitchen. "Come straight to the table. I'll get you something warm to eat."

Dad glanced at Mom, then shifted shyly from foot to foot.

"Um, Grandma… there's actually something we need to do first. We have to go out again for another hour. We didn't manage to finish everything at work."

"But we'll be back soon," Mom added quickly, noticing the

disappointment on the children's faces. "It's not far from here."

"Why?!" the children cried, their hearts sinking.

"We bought special presents for the children at the orphanage, and we want to deliver them ourselves before the clock strikes midnight," Mom explained softly. "You remember the big house at the edge of the forest?"

"But you said we'd go sledding! And Father Yule is coming soon!" Sasha protested. He had only recently turned five, and spending New Year's Eve without his parents seemed impossible.

Mom knelt down again and took their little hands in hers.

"Sasha, Sofia, you are such kind, clever, wonderful little rays of light. Father Yule is coming to visit you tonight because your hearts are full of hope. But he hasn't visited the children at the orphanage for a very long time."

"Why hasn't he?" Sasha asked, raising his chestnut eyebrows in surprise.

"Because life has been difficult for those children, and many of them have stopped believing in Father Yule and in magic. You see, Father Yule's sleigh is guided by belief. When someone stops believing, his magic can no longer find them. We want to bring them these gifts to remind them that wonderful things can still happen."

Mom and Dad quickly gathered the large boxes of toys, promised Grandma they would be back soon, and stepped out into the swirling snowstorm once more.

As the door clicked shut, Sofia and Sasha stood in the hallway.

That was when Sofia noticed a smaller, beautifully wrapped box sitting forgotten on the bench near the coat rack. A tag attached to it read: *For Veronica.*

"Oh no! Look!" Sofia whispered, her eyes widening. "Mom and Dad forgot Veronica's present! She's the littlest girl at the orphanage. What if she stays awake waiting and doesn't get anything?"

"Shall we take it to her?" Sasha suggested eagerly, pointing to their sled by the door. "Mom said it's very close."

"Grandma won't let us go out in this storm," Sofia replied, thinking hard.

"Then we won't tell her," his big sister said, a brave smile lighting up her face.

"Do you want to run away into the woods?" Sasha asked, shocked. He loved Grandma and knew she would be frightened, but he couldn't bear the thought of a little girl being forgotten on New Year's Eve.

"Don't you want Veronica to receive her miracle?" Sofia asked, narrowing her eyes playfully to encourage him.

"Of course I do," her brother answered firmly.

"And don't you want to help Mom and Dad finish their secret mission for Father Yule?"

"Yes, I do!" Sasha said, puffing out his chest. His little face instantly filled with the importance of their rescue mission.

"Then let's go!" Sofia whispered excitedly.

They began preparing for their journey with great seriousness.

Into their backpacks, they packed everything they thought a winter expedition might require: Veronica's precious gift, two spare pairs of thick socks, two sweet buns in case they got hungry, and two long strings of battery-powered fairy lights left over from decorating the tree.

They slipped quietly past the kitchen, where Grandma was busy baking something that smelled wonderfully of cinnamon and vanilla, and stepped out into the freezing twilight.

As they reached the edge of the dark, whispering pine forest, the wind began to howl. The shadows of the trees stretched long and deep.

"I wonder what's in the box?" Sasha asked, his voice trembling slightly as he looked at the dense woods ahead. Sofia noticed the flicker of fear in her little brother's eyes.

"Don't be afraid. We'll manage together — and maybe Father Yule will even take us to his workshop one day!" she said cheerfully.

Hoping to comfort him, she pulled a string of fairy lights from her backpack and wrapped it around Sasha's thick winter coat. She switched it on, and instantly he glowed with warm golden and silver light. He looked just like a walking magical present!

"Now Father Yule will definitely see me in the dark!" Sasha cheered, his fear instantly forgotten.

"Exactly!" Sofia agreed, wrapping the second string of lights around her own waist like a bright, glowing belt.

Taking her brother's mitten-covered hand, Sofia pulled the

sled behind them. Together, the two walking garlands ventured into the snowy depths of the forest, their lights illuminating the white path beneath their feet.

The storm tried to blind them, and the snow rose as high as their knees, but the warm lights helped them keep going. Before long, the welcoming windows of the orphanage appeared through the trees.

They crept up to the porch and carefully placed Veronica's forgotten present beside the front door. Then they rang the bell and hurried to hide behind a large snowbank.

An older woman opened the door and gasped with delight at the sight of the beautiful package. She called out to the children inside. Through the window, Sofia and Sasha saw a little girl with bright eyes hugging the box, her face lighting up with newfound hope.

The magic had found her.

Smiling proudly, the brother and sister turned to head home. But the storm had completely covered their tracks. The forest had become a swirling wall of white.

Suddenly, the wind stopped. The falling snowflakes froze in midair, turning into shimmering crystals. A deep, melodious sound of silver bells echoed from the sky, and a grand wooden sleigh pulled by magnificent white stags glided down from the clouds, landing silently on the snow right in front of them.

A tall, magnificent figure stepped out of the sleigh. He wore a deep red coat embroidered with delicate frost patterns. His long

beard looked like spun silver, and his eyes held the twinkle of a thousand stars.

It was Father Yule himself.

"Sofia, Sasha," Father Yule said, his voice as warm and deep as the rumble of a cozy fireplace. "It is a true honor to meet you. My stags spotted your beautiful lights shining all the way from the clouds."

The children stood frozen in awe.

Father Yule reached up to his coat and carefully removed two glowing, intricate crystals from its decorations.

"Take these two living snowflakes," he said, placing one in each of their little mittens. "Whenever you need a little wonder, simply hold them in your hands and call for me. These are given only to my brightest and bravest helpers. Tonight, you became my little fireflies."

He paused, his eyes twinkling with gentle, grandfatherly sternness.

"But next time you decide to go on an adventure, remember to take much better care of your grandmother. She loves you dearly."

He winked.

"Thank you, Father Yule!" the children exclaimed together, their hearts bursting with happiness. It felt as though a warm glow had spread through their entire bodies.

Father Yule helped them climb into his sleigh and, in the blink of an eye, carried them through the stars, setting them down

safely at the edge of their street.

Before they climbed out, Father Yule handed Sofia several beautifully wrapped presents.

"These are for your parents and your dear grandmother," he said with a kind smile. "Please give them my warmest wishes for the New Year."

The children thanked him and carefully tucked the presents away. Then they walked the final few steps home, keeping their precious living snowflakes safe in their pockets.

Suddenly, two figures came running down the snowy road toward them, with Dad close behind.

"Where were you?! Where did you go?! We were beside ourselves with worry!" Mom cried, tears freezing on her cheeks as she threw her arms around them.

"Why did you leave without telling me? My heart nearly stopped!" Grandma sobbed, pulling them into a huge, warm embrace.

Dad stood just behind them, his face tense and stern.

Sasha noticed his father's unhappy expression and realized they had to explain.

"Dad, don't be mad! We're Father Yule's fireflies now! We work for him, just like you and Mom!" Sasha cried happily, his face beaming.

His parents exchanged a puzzled, worried look.

"Sasha, what are you talking about?" Dad asked softly, kneeling down.

“Look!” Sasha jumped up and pointed his bright red mitten toward the night sky.

High above the rooftops, cutting through the clouds, Father Yule’s grand sleigh flew overhead. It performed a graceful, shimmering loop above their house, leaving a trail of golden stardust behind.

Father Yule stood up, removed his magnificent hat, and waved down at the parents and Grandma.

The adults stared into the sky in breathless wonder. Slowly, as realization dawned on their faces, they raised their hands and waved back, their eyes wide with amazement.

The magic had returned to them, too.

“Wait! Father Yule gave us something for you!” Sofia exclaimed, reaching into her pocket. She carefully took out the beautifully wrapped presents he had given them during their magical journey home and handed them to Mom, Dad, and Grandma.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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