



The Strange Invitation

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Written & Illustrated by David & Sabrina Culyba



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A Hazel & Lark Adventure



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Dedicated to Hazel Arcadia Culyba and Lark Marie Culyba



**One day Lark and Hazel went out for some fun.
The weather was warm in the bright summer sun.
They swam and they surfed and they played in the tide.
Then they spotted a bottle with something inside.**



**Lark twisted the cork- out it came with a POP!
The something inside fell out with a PLOP!
"It's a card" she chirped, as she read what was writ.
"You're invited!" it said. Just two words, that was it.**



**"What a strange invitation," said Hazel, confused.
"It doesn't have any Whens, Whats, Wheres or Whos."**

**"It must be a party!" said Lark to her friend.
"Of course, we will go- it's rude not to attend."
So they boarded their boat and set sail with full throttle
to find who had sent them the invite by bottle.**





Just then at the helm was a BUMP!, then an “Ow!”
And a dolphin appeared ‘neath the waves at the bow.
“Ahoy there!” said Hazel, “How do you fare?”
“I’m so sorry for that. We did not see you there.”

They sailed and they sailed and they sailed the vast sea.
But no sign of a party- oh, where could it be?
“I’ve a thought,” Hazel said, as the sun started to set,
“Let’s ask for directions, then we’ll find it I bet!”

**“I’m okay” said the dolphin, “but just so you know,”
“your boat will steer best if you watch where you go.”**



**“That’s just it,” cried out Lark, her voice rising a notch,
“We don’t know where we’re going, so how can we watch?”
They explained to the dolphin and showed off the card.
The dolphin agreed that their task was quite hard.**

**“The ocean is vast, and your boat is so small,”
“it will take you forever to sail ‘round it all.”
“If you want some advice, if you’ll take my directive,”
“you need to approach from a different perspective.”**

**"Okay." said Lark, "We'll take your advice."
Up they flew to the stars, where the view was quite nice.
Lark called out to the moon and recounted their plight,
"I don't suppose you've seen a party tonight?"**



**Said the moon, "From up here, I can see quite a lot."
"But have I seen your party? I'm afraid I have not."
"Still, I did see an island, not far from your ship."
"It'd be perfect for parties- perhaps worth a trip?"**






**“No one’s here.” noted Hazel, as ‘round them she stared.
“Well, I’m hardly no one.” a small voice declared.**


**The moon gave directions, and soon they found land.
They anchored their vessel, then jumped out to the sand.
A coconut tree and a mountain of stone
was all that there was. It seemed they were alone.**

**Upon closer inspection, the two friends could see
a gecko, right there, hanging out on the tree.**



**“So I see!” agreed Lark, “But you are so small.”
“It’s no wonder that we didn’t spot you at all.”**

**“Aha!” said the gecko, “You’d be surprised”
“what some folks will miss, no matter the size.”
“I’ve found if there’s something that you need to find,”
“you’ve got to look closely, and open your mind.”**



At the gecko's wise words, they suddenly saw that mountain- it wasn't a mountain at all but a troll, who was crying, and looking quite low, "What's wrong?" Hazel asked, "Can we help? Let us know."

**"It's just," said the troll, between sobs and sighs, "I've sent many invites but received no replies."
"I'm having a party and I want to have fun,"
"but a party is best when there's more than just one."**

★ Then Hazel and Lark lit up with delight,
“We’re here for your party! We got your invite.”
The troll gave a big smile, then put on a hat.
“Let the party begin!” And it did, just like that.

★ Their new friends showed up to join in the cheer.
And Lark said to Hazel, as the ending drew near,
“I’m glad we set off without Who, Where, or When.”
“Who knows what you’ll miss if you never begin?”

