

BOOK ONE

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The  
Dunchkins



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# Chapter 1



My name is Capricorn. Some people think: That's not a name, that's a Zodiac sign. Trust me, I've heard it before. But that's the name I was given.

I want to tell you first and foremost about my family. I have the most unusual family that has ever lived. By the time I'm done explaining why you'll have no choice but to agree with me.

First, I have twelve brothers and sisters, so there are thirteen kids in our family. However, we're not biologically related to each other, except for Breezy and Hazy, who are twin sisters. We were all adopted, but we were as close as any biological family would be, perhaps even closer. We have one parent, our father Casey Munch, the man who adopted us all. We hardly ever called him Dad though; instead, we called him CC. It's a nickname we came up with a while back and the name stuck.

You're probably not going to believe what I say next, and I don't blame you. I wouldn't believe me either if I didn't know otherwise, but I swear every word is true.

Alright here it goes...my brothers, sisters, and I have special powers.

Some people would even call it magic.

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I know, I'm full of it, but it's true. I can't explain why either which I'm sure doesn't help my credibility. All I know is around the time my sister Ashley reached the age of ten (she was the oldest, so the first to turn 10), she started developing these unusual powers.

She made CC jump ten feet in the air the day she came running into the room to first show her new powers off. "CC! CC! Watch this!" she squealed excitedly, as she raised her hand and with no more effort than it takes to wave, produced a beam of light, making the cereal box sitting on the table lift smoothly into the air, float across the room, circle around, then land gracefully in the same spot on the table.

CC gaped at her. I was afraid his eyes would pop out of his head. "H-h-how did you do that?" he stammered.

Ashley gave him a mischievous grin. "I don't know, but I can. And wait till you see what else I can do."

It didn't take long before we found out what that was as Ashley started showing more of her powers. CC didn't know what to make of it, and honestly, I think it frightened him, but somehow he instinctively knew to keep it a secret. But what really astounded CC was as the rest of my siblings and I reached the same age, we acquired the same powers. Pretty soon every one of us was walking around using magic like it was the most natural thing in the world.

We could do things far more powerful than levitating cereal boxes too. This was discovered the day our brother Ryan hit the curb at full speed while riding his bike, and went flying headfirst over the handlebars, busting his head open on the sidewalk. He laid sobbing and screaming in pain, his leg bent at an abnormal angle, while the rest of us surrounded him, looking on in horrified shock.

"Oh my God!" CC screamed as he dialed 911. "An

ambulance is on the way! Just hold on, Ryan!” He was so distraught he didn’t see our sister Breezy step out from the crowd and approach Ryan, gently resting her hand on his head to comfort him. “It’s okay. Everything is going to be okay,” she soothed, lightly caressing his forehead. Suddenly a warm, yellow light appeared from under Breezy’s hand and burned brighter and brighter with full intensity. Just as it reached maximum brilliance, it promptly died out, and Breezy lifted her hand, revealing unbroken, healed skin on Ryan’s forehead. Breezy quickly moved to Ryan’s leg, and the beam of light once again radiated from her fingers, sputtering out more rapidly this time, but when she moved her hand away Ryan’s leg was no longer twisted, and he was able to move it as easily as before. By the time the paramedics arrived, the only thing they found was the circle of us standing in open-mouthed astonishment, gaping at the little girl who stood beaming in the center, appearing to glow with the warm light that had emanated from her just moments ago.

We have different theories on how we happened to possess these powers, but they are only guesses. We’ve never been able to verify a single one. You’re still with me, which means I haven’t lost credibility yet, so I hesitate to add this last point but I have to. When we developed these powers at the age of 10, that was the last year we aged - physically and psychologically. We think something in the energetic makeup of the powers crossed with our natural biological makeup to cause a chemical reaction that permanently stunted our growth. Therefore, we could never grow up. We lived our lives as eternal children. I deliberately chose the word eternal because due to our healing powers, which could mend any sickness or injury, death and serious illness became something we could easily avoid.

When CC finally came to terms with the powers we had

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and everything that meant, he sat us down for a family meeting. He directed us not to tell anybody, under any circumstances, about the magic. He warned us that power in the wrong hands is dangerous, and if anybody found a way to get ahold of that power, it could have disastrous consequences. We didn't think this was a problem because who would ever believe us anyway? Then CC set some major ground rules regarding the use of the powers.

“You're going to have to learn how to use these powers responsibly. Use them only for good and to help and heal. Don't use powers just for fun or treat them like they're toys. Power like this is very serious, so take it very seriously,” he stressed.

Now you understand why we are unlike any other family on Earth. I even came up with a name that perfectly fits us.

“Hey, I thought of the best name for us,” I said to everyone one day during dinner. “Want to hear it? Munchkins. Think about it: Our last name is Munch, plus because of the whole not growing up thing, we stay small. Like munchkins. It's perfect.”

Twisty wrinkled her nose. “Eh, I'm not sure I like it, Capricorn. It sounds a little insulting.”

“I think it's cool, Cap,” Allie smiled. “You're right, especially with our last name being Munch, how could we not use that?”

“I agree,” Breezy added. “There's something else too, Capricorn, that makes it even more fitting. The word 'kin' means family. So “munchkins” is perfect because we're the Munch family.”

“I like that,” CC smiled. “Munchkins it is.”