



Charlotte and the Wish-Orbs: Protector of the Ancient Oak

Once upon a stormy day stood the ancient oak tree, its branches stretched out, curled, and twisted like an octopus' tentacles, ready to give you a big hug. The branches were long enough to slide down, and Charlotte Laffsalot often wondered who had already slid down them, smiling and laughing.

As the storm raged, Charlotte, the last protector of the ancient oak tree, grabbed her rucksack and ran out of her house, her red, curly hair whipping around her face in the wind. Although she was only six years old, Charlotte knew she would need all her strength and courage to keep the tree safe.

Far away in the distance, a fierce dragon roared angrily. Charlotte froze. Bravely, she raced across the dark, dense forest until she reached the ancient oak tree. Above her, stars blinked, and trees moaned as the fiery dragon soared swiftly through the night sky.

Suddenly, the sad-looking tree sang a sweet song. Minutes later, Charlotte was asleep, the dragon still roaring as it flew above her. The dragon swooped down, its mighty wings beating the air, sparks shooting out of its huge nostrils. Meanwhile, the tree sang peacefully about all the girls who had been its protector over the years.

The dragon gave another angry roar, and the tree began to sing louder, trying to wake Charlotte. Blinking sleepily, Charlotte stretched awake into the warmth of the sun. It was a blissful moment before she realized the heat came not from the sun, but from the dragon's fiery breath. She and the tree were in unspeakable danger.

As the dragon flapped its wings in anger, Charlotte urgently reached for her backpack with trembling fingers. She plunged her hand into the bag and felt the silky smooth, pulsing warmth of her magic wish-orbs. A sense of calmness washed over her. She knew what she must do.

With a knowing grin, she whispered her wish to the orb. Aimed just right, the orb had the power to unleash the wrath of Mother Nature. Charlotte wished for a tsunami to wash the dragon away. Adrenaline surged through her body as she determinedly launched the orb toward the golden acorn nestled in the oak's uppermost branches.

Would the orb find its target?

Charlotte's hope shattered as the orb veered off course and smashed to smithereens among the tree's twisted roots. The dragon gave Charlotte a venomous look, sucked in a huge breath, and shot out a flaming fireball. The tree's outer branches caught fire, and the oak screamed in agony as the flames licked its leaves.

Charlotte reached frantically for a second orb. Gasping for breath, she whispered her wish—this time for a thundering storm to release torrents of hail and rain. She took aim like an Olympian and catapulted the orb towards its target.

Time seemed to stand still as Charlotte followed the trajectory of the scintillating sphere. She noticed with dismay that the orb was being steered off course by the storm winds. But then something extraordinary happened.

With an angry flick of his tail, the dragon tried to bash the orb away. However, he only succeeded in smashing it into the golden acorn. Immediately, there was a flash of blinding light. Then, torrential rain and hail began to pour from the dark, thunderous sky.

The flames were extinguished, and the dragon fled in furious defeat. The storm quickly calmed, and Charlotte fell asleep in the safety of the tree's branches, soothed by the tree's sweet lullaby.

She dreamed of the future. She dreamed of her own cozy cottage in the woods and of the daughter she would share it with. She cuddled the backpack closer, knowing she must protect the final wish-orb so she could give it to her daughter—the next protector of the ancient oak.

By The Children of Southridge First School

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