

Ana Alonso

# The Rainbow Party

Illustrated  
by Mercè Canals

ANAYA



**PINCH OF SALT**  
A LITTLE BIT



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Juan Ignacio Luca de Tena, 15. 28027 Madrid  
[www.anayainfantilyjuvenil.com](http://www.anayainfantilyjuvenil.com)  
[www.anayapizcadesal.com](http://www.anayapizcadesal.com)  
e-mail: [anayainfantilyjuvenil@anaya.es](mailto:anayainfantilyjuvenil@anaya.es)

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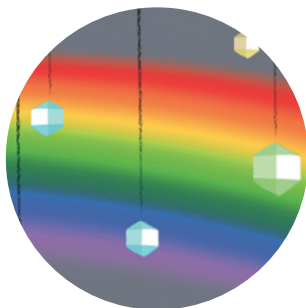
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# **The Rainbow Party**

**Illustrations  
Mercè Canals**

**Translation  
Sharon Prime**



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## CHAPTER 1



‘It’s raining cats and dogs,’ complains King Tristan looking through the window. ‘When is it going to stop? This weather is really depressing... How I miss the summer!’

‘Dad, you’re exaggerating.’ Princess Enid takes her father’s hand. ‘Occam needs rain, after so many months of good weather. Rain is good for agriculture.’

‘I know, I know. Do you think I’m stupid? If it doesn’t rain, the fields can’t produce wheat, and the orchards can’t give apples. But I’m sick of being indoors with nothing to do. We had such a good time last summer, going to lots of places in that mobile castle you gave me!’

Enid smiles and looks at her friend Bert, who is sitting on the floor by the fire, reading a book. King Tristan’s words get Bert’s attention, and he looks up from his book.



‘But, Your Majesty, you love reading,’ he says. ‘When I arrived at your Court, you were very happy because I gave you lots of books as a present from my father, remember?’



The king sighs, very sad.

‘Those were other times,’ he says. ‘I’ve always liked reading, but now, after reading for some time, my head starts to hurt. And I can’t distinguish the letters well... Sometimes I wonder if it has something to do with our dear Royal Magician.’

‘With Malena?’ says Enid, with an angry face. ‘You don’t think that woman has damaged your eyes on purpose, do you? Her magic isn’t that powerful!’

The king shrugs his shoulders.

‘And what other explanation is there?’ he asks. ‘Believe me, Malena hates me more every day. She can’t forgive me for the things I told her after the affair of the false steam castle. Since then, she looks at me in a way that almost frightens me.’



‘Well, there’s a solution for that,’ says Enid looking at her father. ‘Dismiss Malena!’

‘Dismissing her? No, no, I can’t,’ says the king surprised. ‘This kingdom depends too much on magic, we can’t survive without a Royal Wizard.’

‘But there’s Lucius!’ says Bert from the floor. ‘Lucius is a better wizard than Malena. Why not appoint him?’

‘Because Malena would be furious and she would make life impossible for us all,’ says King Tristan. ‘What’s more, Lucius already has a very important job: he is Enid’s teacher. The future of this kingdom depends on that.’

‘You’re too afraid of Malena, Dad. But there’s no need to be afraid of her. Especially now, while she’s at that International Wizards’ Congress in the north of Occam. She won’t be back for at least two weeks!’



‘It makes no difference,’ answers the king. ‘Malena has spies everywhere. That parakeet she gave me, for example... I’m sure it’s one of her agents!’

‘For goodness sake, Dad... It’s only a bird!’

‘Yes, I know, but it’s a very clever bird. It’s probably magic. He never does anything unusual when we’re near, so we won’t be suspicious.’

‘And why don’t you give it to somebody else, Your Majesty?’ asks Bert. ‘That way you won’t have to worry about it...’

‘Because it entertains me! Sometimes I talk to it, and I forget it’s only a bird. I speak to that bird as I used to speak with my friend Marc. Oh Marc! When I





think you asked him to come back to Occam and he refused!’

‘Marc will come back sooner or later. You must be patient, Dad. Those scientific studies he’s doing will be useful to us here in Occam, when he combines them with his magic. But he needs time to learn about all those things they know there.’

‘Yes, yes. Time. The thing is he abandoned me. I’m sorry, children. I know I complain too much, but this rain is driving me mad. I can’t go out, I can’t read... And I’m too depressed to rule over the country!’



Enid is about to answer him when something on the other side of the window catches her attention.

‘Dad, look...’

King Tristan looks through the window. Beyond the rain, on the horizon, there is a splendid rainbow.

‘My goodness, Enid. That is..., that is... incredible!’

Bert leaves his book on the floor and joins them at the window.

‘Not even Malena can do magic like that,’ he says, impressed. ‘I wonder how can the rain produce something like that... Maybe there’s magic in the raindrops.’

‘Yes, it could be,’ says the king. ‘Or perhaps there are some little creatures in the clouds who

cause that strange phenomenon. Some kind of microscopic fairies.'

'Do you think they are the same creatures that cause thunder and lightning?' asks Bert.



The king meditates.

'Well, no. I don't think so. There are probably two rival groups in the clouds. One group practises black magic, and they produce thunder and lightning. Dangerous creatures, if you want my opinion. Probably similar to small dragons, almost transparent.'

'I imagine them more like tiny orcs,' says Bert. 'But they could also be a kind of invisible spirits.'

'Of course, and I suppose they don't get on very well with those kind creatures who make the colours,' says the king dreamily. 'I suppose they annoy them all the time, and they don't let them use their magic.'

'Except when it rains,' points out Bert. 'When it rains, the thunder creatures suffer a lot, and they express their pain through thunder and lightning. That's when the other creatures take advantage and show their beautiful, colourful rainbows.'



'That's enough!'

Enid looks angrily at her friend Bert, and then at King Tristan.







‘But can you hear yourselves?’ she asks. ‘You are like little children imagining silly stories about the clouds and the rain. Microscopic magic creatures... Are you crazy?’

‘Occam is a magic kingdom, child, whether you like it or not,’ replies the king. ‘Our explanation about those magic creatures in the clouds is perfectly possible. Why do you think it’s crazy?’

‘Because nobody has ever seen those creatures,’ says Enid, losing her patience. ‘That’s a little strange, isn’t it?’

‘I haven’t seen the Earth, and yet I believe in it!’ says the king. ‘And I believe in all your stories about your visit there. Why don’t you believe in my stories?’

‘Because you’re inventing them, Dad! You don’t really have any idea why rainbows appear in the sky.’

‘Neither do you,’ says King Tristan, offended. ‘But at least I admit my ignorance. You forget that, in Occam, many things happen that nobody can explain. It’s a magic country, a magic world. If you don’t understand that, you won’t be a good queen when the time comes.’



‘I don’t see it like that, Dad. There’s magic here because people believe in it and they have invented spells and things. But that doesn’t mean that everything

is magic. Marc thinks the same. He thinks that the laws of the universe are the same everywhere, and that the only way of studying them is through science.'

'So, you think there is a scientific explanation for the rainbow,' says Bert. 'But what explanation can there be? How can something so perfect appear suddenly in the middle of the sky? I don't know, Enid. In this case, it seems to me more a question of magic than science.'

'Well, there's only one way to find out who's right,' says Enid.

Her father leaves the window and looks at her in alarm.

'No, Enid. You're not going to Earth again to look for answers. I don't give you my permission.'

Enid sighs with resignation.

'I know, Dad. I'm not going to Earth, but I'm going to ask Marc for the answers.'

'Marc? Enid, Marc is on Earth, and I just told you...'

'I know. I know I can't go there. But there must be other ways of contacting him.'

'A crystal ball, maybe?' asks the king.

'No, Dad,' says Enid. 'I'm thinking of writing a letter.'

## The Rainbow Party

To celebrate the king's birthday, his daughter Enid wants to give a big party. But her magic cannot compete with the effects of light and colour produced by the witch Milena, so she asks for some help from her terrestrial friends. Penelope and Thomas teach Enid to use prisms to refract colours and to create effects using light. And she receives a very special gift: a telescope!

### With «The Rainbow Party» you will learn...

About light and colour, and the phenomena of reflection and refraction of light.

Science



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