

The Adventures of Princesse Pearl



Presented by



*The Adventures of Princesse Pearl
The Race for Home*

Episode 4

The background is a repeating pattern of pink floral and vine motifs on a light pink background. The pattern includes stylized leaves, small flowers, and swirling vines. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is positioned in the center-right of the image.

Our story begins...



The day after the magical mishap at Mrs. Scuttlebug's everyone was in the mood to have a little fun. They decided to stop at the fair on the way to the Great Willow.

Everything about the fair was magical and fantastic. The four friends and Mrs. Scuttlebug, who had decided to come at the last minute, could hardly wait to ride the rides and play all the games.

Before they could do that, Princesse Pearl wanted to look for Rosie's sister, Sophie. Surely, she would have come to the fair. Pearl, Barlow, Lefty, Rosie, and Mrs. Scuttlebug spread out and stopped everyone they could find. They asked the bearded lizards juggling sparklers. They asked the Siamese twins, who were putting on a puppet show. They asked the dragonfly trainer while she was in the middle of organizing an air show, where the dragonflies would perform the death-defying trick of looping in a tight group around a maze of tree branches.

The Official Fair Events Master, Mr. Withers, was a round beaver with a long flat tail that twitched when he talked.



He proudly wore a top hat and blue-and-yellow-checkered suit and held a cane in his left hand. When they asked if he'd seen the little sugar glider, he said no, but insisted on making an official announcement.

Mr. Withers thumped his tail on the ground loudly several times to call attention.

"This is an official announcement." With the Official Fair Events Master, everything was official. "Will Sophie the sugar glider please report to the main stage. I repeat, will Sophie the sugar glider please report to the main stage." Pearl and Rosie waited for her sister. And they waited. And they waited. And they waited some more. But Sophie never showed. Nor did anyone with information about her.

"It's OK," Rosie said, refusing to get down. "I know she's safe. We just keep missing each other. We will find each other."

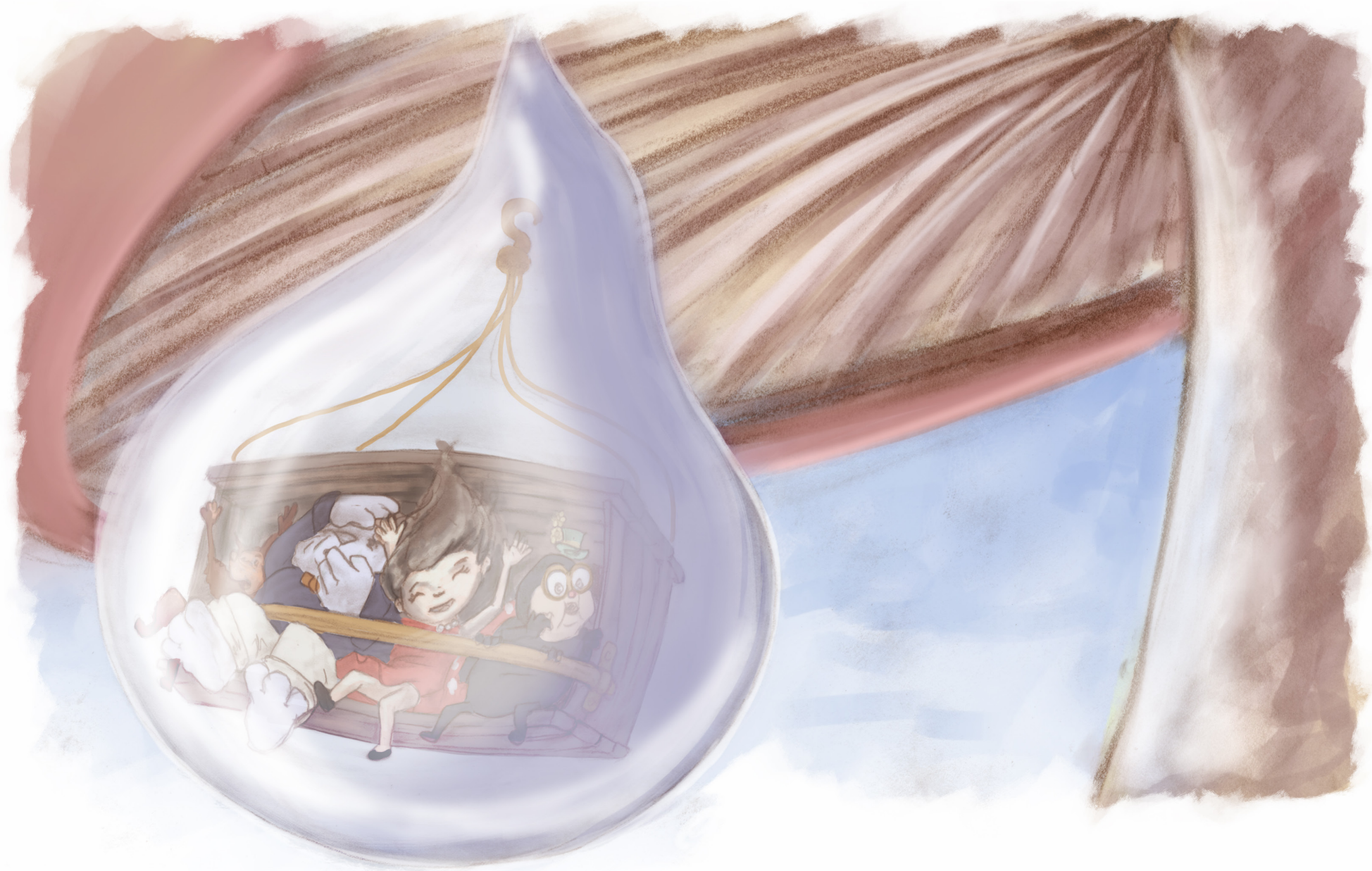
"Of course you will!" Pearl said.

"Why don't we go ride the rides," Rosie said. She didn't want her friends to miss out on all of fun of the fair.

"What do you want to do first, Rosie?" Barlow asked.

"Hmm," she thought. "My favorite has always been the swings." So they rode the swings, and they had so much fun they got in line two more times.

"Oh look," Barlow cried after their third ride, "It's the Zipper."



Afterwards, Pearl wanted to ride on The Rain Drop, which drops you from two stories high in a drop of water.

To get to the top of the ride, the friends had to climb 37 stairs. When they got to the top of a mushroom, they climbed into a seated car that was actually inside a giant drop of water.

When everyone was strapped in, a timer counted backwards:

“THREE...

TWO...

ONE...

BEEP!”

When the buzzer buzzed, the friends fell to the ground like a drop of water during a storm.

“Ahhh!” Rosie cried.

“Dearie, meeeeeeee-eeeeeeee!” shouted Mrs. Scuttlebug.

Pearl’s stomach did flip flops.

Barlow’s head felt like 50 butterflies were flapping in his head.

Lefty was fine and good to go again, but no one else did. Instead, they stopped to get some vanilla cake ice cream when Pearl saw the sign:

TODAY AT 6PM:
OBSTACLE COURSE RELAY RACE.
WIN AN EAGLE VIEW!

“That’s it!” she snatched up Rosie in her hands and hugged the small creature to her chest. “That’s what we need to find Sophie!”

“What?” Rosie still had no idea what Pearl was talking about.

Pearl ran over to the sign and pointed. “If we can win this race, we can win a ride on an Eagle! Do you know what that means?”

Her friends shook their heads no.

“They have the best eyesight! We’ll be able to see the entire valley! We’re sure to find your sister then!”

“Yeah!”

“What do we have to do?” Barlow asked between licks of the two ice cream cones he was holding. He had strawberry stains on the right side of his white face, and lemon stains on the other side.

“We have to win this race.”

“And how do we do that?”

“I don’t know, let’s find out.” Pearl found Mr. Withers, who happily gave her the official contest rules. With every word, he swung his arms in big, swooping gestures to help make his point. It was all very official.

“You will be the orange team,” he said, handing Pearl four orange shirts. “First, you must have a team of four.

Second, all of your teammates must complete one leg of the race. You can choose.



Third, you can do one walk through of the course, but walking only. This is to help you choose who will do which part.

Fourth, anyone caught cheating will be disqualified.

Fifth, the winners will be the first team to cross the

finish line all together. After each individual has completed his or her part, they can follow the course to cheer on their teammates. Understand?"

Everyone nodded.

"The very last part requires you to put the ring, which



you'll be handing off from teammate to teammate, over a pole for your team. Anyway you can."

"Well, there are five of us," Rosie said.

"Oh, no, dearie," Mrs. Scuttlebug waved her hands. "No, no. I'm way too old for this. I'll be on the side cheering."

With that she excused herself to go find a seat at the finish line.

"That works," Barlow said. "Maybe we should go walk through the course."

"Come," Mr. Withers grabbed Barlow's paw. "I'll explain it." Barlow followed.

"The first teammates will race each other from here," he tapped his cane on the ground, "and climb all the way to the top of that tree." His cane pointed to the top of an Oak. "Then, they must swing from one of the vines all the way back down to the ground and land on that very rock." Mr. Withers motioned to a rock on the side of the river.

“Oh, my,” Pearl said.

“Mind you, if you swing too far and land in the water, you’ll be carried down the river and your team will be out of the competition.”

“Well, Rosie, I think we know your part,” Lefty said. Pearl and Barlow nodded in agreement.

“Here, the teammates will hand off the ring, and the second person will have to try to cross the river.”

“That doesn’t look too bad,” Barlow shrugged. “It’ll be easy to get across on those rocks.”

“You wouldn’t think so,” said Mr. Withers. “But look closer. Those aren’t rocks, those are giant tortoises, and they’ll be swimming back and forth during the race.”

“They’re going to move?” Rosie asked in amazement.

“Oh, yes. Otherwise, this would be too easy,” smiled The Official Fair Events Master. The friends looked around.

“I can do that,” Lefty said. Barlow and Pearl looked relieved, but all that changed when they saw the next two obstacles.



Mr. Withers continued. “Next, one lucky teammate will have to climb 10 feet in the air and walk across this tightrope holding a wiggling snake.”

Pearl and Barlow looked at each other. Neither was excited about this one. Barlow didn’t like heights, and Pearl was not fond of snakes, even if they were nice snakes, as Mr. Withers had promised. To decide, Pearl and Barlow did what they always did: they played hot potato. When Barlow lost, he didn’t look happy, but he said, ok anyway.



This left Pearl with the last leg of the race.

“Welcome to the last part,” Mr. Withers thumped his tail on the ground, excitedly. “The Snaggletooth Roots Ravine!”

“The what?” Rosie and Barlow asked.

“The Snaggletooth Roots Ravine!” Mr. Withers said it louder now, like he was announcing to a large audience.

“Here, the last teammate will have to wind their way in and out, up and down, in and around the tunnels that these roots make.”

“What’s the catch?” Pearl asked.

“Ah, very smart, my dear. Ve-ry smart. These roots move, and if you don’t get through fast enough, you could get twisted up in them, maybe even caught for a short time. That could slow you down, and the other team could win.”

Mr. Withers looked at his watch. “Oh, we’d better get ready. We only have 15 minutes until the start time. Good luck!”

“Well, guys, what do you think?” Pearl turned to her team.

“I think we can do this,” Rosie said.

“Yeah, I think the hardest part for me will just be timing the jumps,” Lefty said. “But I got this.”

“Barlow?” Pearl looked at her friend, who had been quiet.

“I’ll do my best,” he said, nervous more about the tightrope than the snake.

“You’ll do great,” Rosie said. “I know it. And don’t worry, it’s not that high, and there’s a net.” Barlow smiled at her and said thanks.

Right then, they heard the loud thumping of Mr. Withers’ tail. “Contestants, we are about to begin. Please take your places!”

There were three other teams competing. The blue team, the red team, and the green team.

When everyone was in place, Mr. Withers held up an air horn and thumped his tail one more time.

“Is everyone ready?” he called.

“Ready!” the contestants called back.

“On your mark!” Rosie looked up at the tree.

“Get set!” She took a big, deep breath and let it out.

BEEEP!

The air horn sounded go and Rosie scrambled across the starting line and to the base of the tree as fast as lightning. With ease, she scrambled from branch to branch to branch, never looking around to see where the other contestants were. She just focused on climbing as fast as she could. When Rosie got to the top, she grabbed the end of a very long vine, and wrapped it around her. Without hesitating, she jumped from the top of the tree and flew in the air. Rosie landed on the rock where Lefty was waiting for her. She handed him the ring, and shouted, “Go! Go!”



With that, Lefty turned and looked at where the tortoises were swimming. As one got close to the rock, Lefty jumped on its back. He was waiting there patiently for another ride when he he heard a SPLASH!

Lefty looked back and saw one of the green team members floating down the river. “Wahoo! One team out!” he shouted.

Instead of celebrating, Lefty should have been focusing more on himself, because when he jumped to the next tortoise he lost his footing and he almost fell into the river.

Luckily, he was able to regain his balance and jump to the next tortoise and then land where Barlow was waiting.

“Good luck,” Lefty said, as he passed him the ring.



Barlow put the ring around his wrist. A race volunteer handed Barlow a yellow snake named Earl. “Don’t worry,” Earl said, “I’m nice. I won’t start my wriggling until you’re up on the wire.”

“Oh great,” Barlow said flatly. “That will help so much.” Earl kept his promise, but when Barlow started tiptoeing across the tightrope, boy that snake moved. Barlow could hardly hold onto him. “Are you supposed to be moving this much?”

“Sorry, friend. This is what they told us to do,” Earl said. The wriggling snake threw Barlow off balance, and he shook from left to right, left to right. He could see the blue team had moved in front of him, but Barlow couldn’t pay attention to that. He kept moving slowly across the wire.

“Just a little more,” Rosie cheered from the ground. “You’re doing great!”

“You haven’t fallen yet!” Lefty shouted. As he said that, the red team member fell and got disqualified. “But he did!” Lefty laughed.

“Lefty!” Rosie said, “That’s not nice!”

Barlow took his last steps and breathed a sigh of relief when he moved onto the platform and gave Earl to a race volunteer. He rushed up to Princesse Pearl and handed off the ring. “Sorry,” he pointed to the blue team, who had rushed ahead of them.

“No problem!” Pearl called over her shoulder as she ran towards the ravine. The princess ran as fast as she could through the shifting roots. Pearl climbed over big roots when there was no space underneath them, and she shimmied through the holes of the roots when she could.

While the limbs shifted around her, so did the size of the spaces, and at one point, a hole as big as Barlow, tightened around her waist. Just when she had caught up to the blue team, she couldn’t move. She was stuck.



“Come on, come on!” Pearl yelled to the roots to hurry. “Let’s go! Come on!” As the roots gave just a little room, Pearl squeezed herself out of the trap and rushed through the rest of the branches. She moved so fast that the area around her was a blur and she moved past the blue team. Pearl crossed the edge of the ravine and met up with her teammates, who were waiting for her. Together they ran to the pole.

“How are we going to do this?” Lefty looked up at the 15-foot pole.

“Here, Pearl, get on my shoulders,” Barlow said. “And then you can hold up Lefty, who can toss Rosie up in the air, and she can glide the ring down as she comes down.” Then he looked at Lefty. “Just don’t try anything,” Barlow nodded at Rosie.

“I won’t. Geez.” Lefty said. “What kind of fox do you think I am?”

“The kind that thinks Rosie would make a great midnight snack.”

Ignoring them, Pearl said, “That’s a great idea, Barlow!”

Just as they had decided on their plan, the blue team jogged to their pole.

“Quick!” Pearl shouted. “They’re here!” And she scrambled up Barlow’s back and stood on his shoulders. “Come on, Lefty!”

Barlow helped lift Lefty from the ground up to Pearl, who put him on her shoulders. Then Rosie climbed up Barlow’s leg, up to his shoulders, up to Pearl, who handed Rosie to Lefty.

With everyone stacked on top of each other, they were just two feet from the top of the pole.

“Are you ready?” Lefty asked Rosie.

“Ready,” Rosie said to him.

“Ok, I’m going to toss you up at the count of three.

“ONE!”

TWO!

THREE!”



With that, Lefty threw Rosie, ring in hand, high in the air, higher than the pole. She floated down gracefully and had plenty of time to guide herself close enough to the pole, so that she was able to drop the ring down on it. She kept floating to the ground, while her teammates climbed down.

The blue team was still trying to find a way to get the ring to the top, as they didn't have a sugar glider on their team.

The orange team crossed the finish line together, meeting the BEEP from the air horn and cheers from the crowd.

"Wahoo!" Pearl and Rosie cried.

"We did it!" Barlow cheered.

"Yeah! We won! We won!" Lefty yelled.

"We're going to find your sister!" Pearl said to Rosie. "Isn't that great?"

Rosie nodded and hugged her. She was so excited, she didn't have any words.

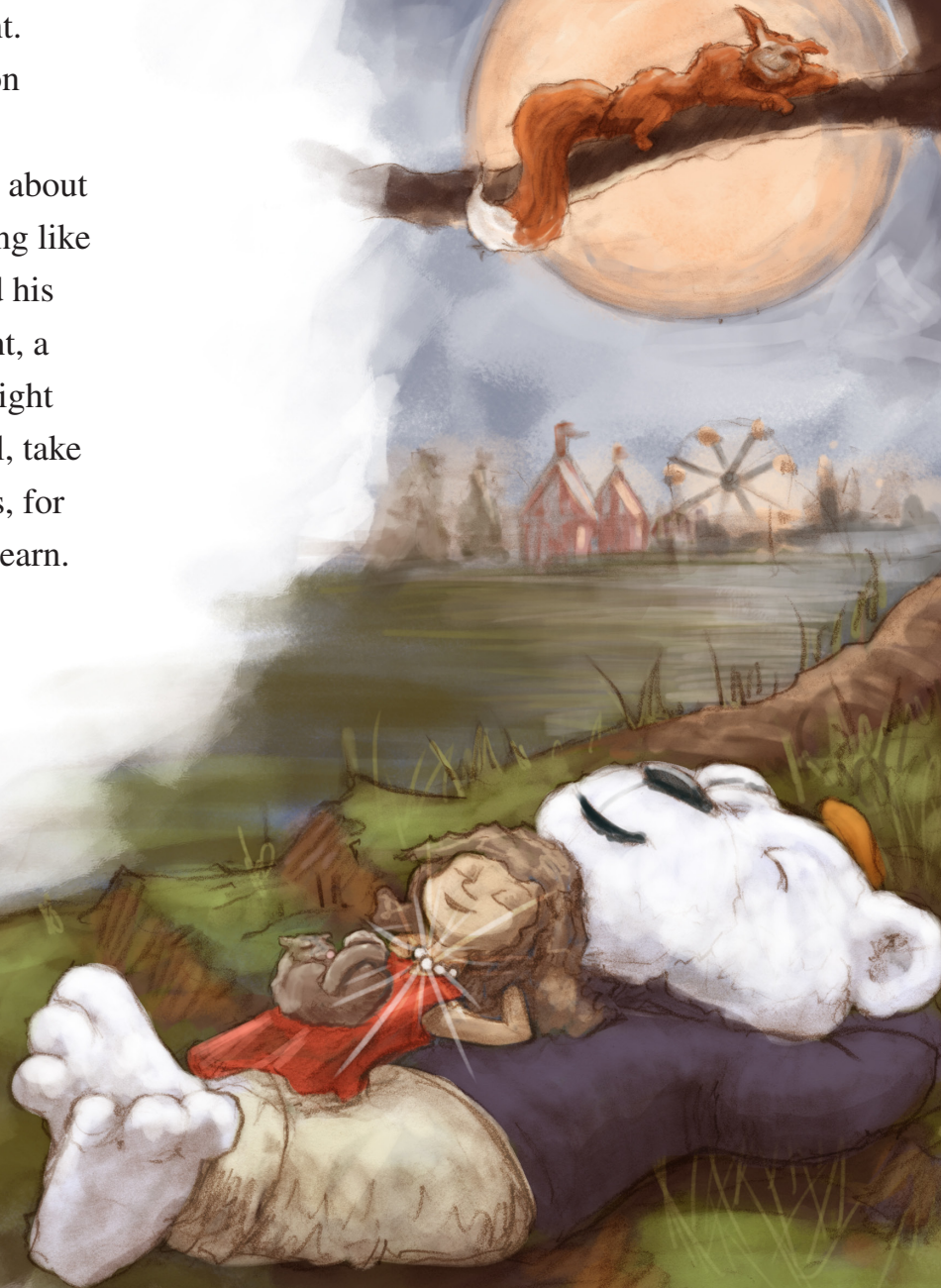
At the finish line, Mr. Withers thumped his tail and called everyone to attention. "Congratulations to all of our participants today! It was an exciting race, wasn't it?"

The crowd cheered in agreement. Pearl hugged all of her friends.

"A special congratulations to our winners, the orange team," he handed Pearl a trophy. It was a Gold Ring. "And, as promised, all of you will receive a Golden Eagle ride tomorrow morning! But right now, let's enjoy some cake!"

After the race and all the celebrating, by the time night fell, the four friends were so tired. They were so tired, they didn't even bother finding a room to stay in that night. Instead, they chose to cozy up to a tree. Pearl lying on Barlow, Rosie on Pearl, and Lefty not too far away.

As her friends slept, Pearl couldn't help but think about how much fun she'd had. She had never done anything like that before, and she loved that each teammate played his or her own part in winning the race. With this thought, a magic pearl appeared on her necklace, glowing as bright as ever. It was the fourth one. "Sweet Princesse Pearl, take the lesson you learned today and remember it always, for it is one of the most important lessons you can ever learn. Always try to work as a team."



The background is a light pink color with a repeating pattern of dark pink floral and vine motifs. The pattern includes stylized leaves, small five-petaled flowers, and swirling vines. In the center of the image, there is a white rectangular box with a subtle drop shadow. Inside this box, the words "The End" are written in a dark pink, elegant cursive script.

The End