

For Luke and Lucy, my reasons to cheer Special thanks to Shannon Penney

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Carmen the Cheerleading Fairy

by Daisy Meadows

SCHOLASTIC INC.



Perilous Practice



"I can't believe we're finally here!"
Kirsty Tate cried, grinning. "I've always
dreamed about taking part in a real
cheerleading competition."

Her best friend, Rachel Walker, squeezed her hand. "I can believe it! You



and your squad have worked really hard. I'm so glad I got to come along to watch you compete!"

The girls linked arms and skipped across the huge lawn in the middle of the Cove College campus. They'd come to Cove City with Kirsty's parents for the big Junior Cheerleading Competition that weekend! It was Kirsty's first year on a squad, and this was their very first





competition. Rachel and Kirsty had only just arrived, but the weekend already felt magical!

"Tumble over that way!" Mr. Tate called from behind the girls, pointing to a large brick building on one corner of the lawn. The archway over the door read COVE COLLEGE GYMNASIUM.

Kirsty smiled and did a series of cartwheels on her way to the gym. Rachel whooped and applauded as Mr. and Mrs. Tate caught up with them.

"Is the rest of your squad meeting you here?" Rachel asked, pulling the gym door open.

"Yup! It's our last practice before the competition tomorrow," Kirsty said, peering around the massive gym in awe.



"Though I'm not sure how I'll ever find them. This place is huge!"

Girls and boys were scattered all over the gym. Some were stretching and warming up, while others chatted excitedly. Colorful mats covered the floor, and Rachel and Kirsty could see piles of pom-poms and stacks of megaphones over by the bleachers.

