

The sky was a velvet-black, and everything glittered with stardust—the animals, the trees, the meadows, the rivers, and the mountains. They all shone. At the front of the crowd there were eight young animals—a fox, an otter, a badger, a wildcat, a deer, a squirrel, a sparrowhawk, and a mouse. The squirrel scampered over to the fox and stood up on his back legs, his shimmering tail curling like a comma behind him. Once again, the time has come for us to send a group of young Star Animals to the human world.