



Ann's Adventure

By:

**Callan
Patterson**



On a dark night three years ago, Ann Copper walked alone up the old path that led to the broken down castle on the top of the hill. It was a cold November night, and the colored leaves were blowing in the wind.

She wandered past the ruins of the old cemetery that sat below the castle on the mountain. Storm clouds thundered in the distance. Ann shivered as she went, her hands and face frozen from the cold. Now she wished she had worn gloves. She made her way over to the fallen branch that lay along the icy stream that went past the old cemetery. She was determined to get to the ruins of the castle before the storm set in.

"Better hurry or you'll be soaked to the bone." She told herself quietly. The wind howled causing her to jump. The old cemetery, and the castle along with the little stretch of woods around it, had a kind of unsettling feeling. In the mornings, mist would rise in and near the dense forest, making it almost impossible to see through to where the remains of the old cemetery stood and the path up to the castle. At night, the wolves would howl at the moon and the predators would be on the prowl for food. It was night.

Ann's parents would not miss her for they were out on a business trip and her sister was at a friend's house. Her brother was working a night shift. Ann absolutely loved the old castle on the top of the hill, though there were parts still left undiscovered by the fearless girl.

With icy cold fingers, Ann pushed open the old wooden doors of the castle. She pulled out her flashlight as she walked in. She went there often to look around and investigate the old items that she often found lying on the floor or to dance in the beautiful ballroom, but this was her first time here before a rainstorm. And at night. The giant hallway stretched out before her.

An owl hooted from its perch on an unsteady brick in the wall. The brick jutted out away from the rest, giving the owls and birds of the surrounding area a place to rest their tired wings.

The owl lifted off as soon as it laid its big brown eyes on Ann. When it flew, some might think it was a hawk. Lightning struck outside. Ann shivered, stuffed her frozen hands into her coat pockets, and moved on into the castle. She was heading to her favorite spot in the castle, the ballroom.

Once she turned the corner, she immediately came to a stop. The doors to the ballroom were wide open. They were never open. She made sure of that everytime she left. She would close the doors and then lock them shut with the door knob. Then she would push on the doors a few times just to make sure.

Cautiously, Ann stepped into the ballroom. An old flower vase was shattered on the floor. Dusty footprints led to the center of the ballroom. The footprints went in circles and sometimes it was just the front of the footprint because the dancer had spun or jumped. At one spot, a giant spot was clear where the dancer had fallen. Ann followed the footprints to the wall. Then they were gone.

"Hello?" She shouted, her voice echoing off the empty castle walls. "Is anyone there?"

There was no answer. Ann left the ballroom and went down a dark hallway that led to steep stairs. Never had she been up there. This part of the castle didn't seem to be connected to the rest because of its darker walls and stoney outside that made it seem more like an evil witch's tower than one of a royal family that was long forgotten.

She heard nothing at first, only the howl of the wind and the rumble of the thunder outside. Then the floor creaked. It's probably just the cat, she thought. Ann wanted to go home now. She felt a very rare

feeling inside that was strange to her. Fear. She was afraid of what it was that had danced in the ballroom; she was scared of whatever was making the noise--even if it was just the cat-- and she was scared of the rain and the effects that it could have on the old castle with its now roofless kitchen. Besides, even if she wanted to head back, the rain would make it extremely difficult for her.

A stray cat that Ann called Faith came careening down the steps. After a shrill cry of surprise, Ann knelt down and pet the cat gently. Faith was as bold as a guard dog. It was rare for a cat such as her to get scared. Once she stood, Faith left her and scrambled away from Ann and whatever was at the top of the old stone steps. Faith was fiercely frightened. Ann was just turning around to head to the kitchen to see if it was flooded yet when she heard a train whistle blow. Ann rushed to the old window, eager to see the train.

Nothing was there except for the old broken train tracks. Suddenly overcome by curiosity, Ann dashed through the castle doors by the steps and out onto the tracks. She walked against the gusty wind down to the train tracks. Ann looked left, then right. There was no train in sight, but there was something else. Along the ominous black tracks, Ann could just make out an old cabin down the tracks. She made a mental note to go there once the rain cleared and she was not so creeped out. Above her, the moon hovered and shinned behind the grey rain clouds. She turned back to the castle. It would be safe and dry. Or she thought it would be...besides the thing at the top of the stairs.

Faith had been scared of whatever it was and Ann had once seen that old cat face a vicious stray dog. She went along carefully, trying not to make a noise as she made her way back to the castle. And that's when a growl sounded.

"Ah!" Ann shrieked, turning around to see who or what it was that had made the noise. There, across from Ann in the tracks was a wolf. Or something that looked like a wolf...

Student Authors



Students in Mrs. Quirk's Language Arts classes have been writing mystery stories for several weeks. For this assignment, students write a mystery story through bell ringers. This story is about a mysterious JOURNEY for a character that students create. Twice per week, they are given a PICTURE that they include in their stories. They are also given instructions on different ways to add descriptive details to their stories.

Although they are presented with the same pictures, Callan Patterson and Braydon Bliss, both seventh graders, have taken on the challenge and created very different journeys for their characters. The examples presented in this issue are Chapter one of their stories.

The Ancient Artifact

By: **Braydon Bliss**

On a dark night in the cemetery with many grotesque trees and rough terrain beside the abandoned castle ruins that is so beat up it looks as if it's been there for centuries... Jerome was digging, hoping to find what he was looking for. At last he found it and with an eerie feeling he picked it up and showed it to the moon. It was short golden pole with a circular outline on top, and in that outline was a strange blue colored crystal. As if on queue, the peculiar crystal lit up and BOOM it blew up. When Jerome went to put down the ancient artifact, he was shocked when he couldn't.

Jerome was a fifteen year old boy with an odd square shaped head and was strikingly tall standing at six feet five inches. In all his life he couldn't imagine that he would be somebody who investigates mysteries such as this one. Just then an explosion went off from the middle of the dense forest. So with the pole still in his hand, he set off hoping to find something or someone who could help him.

About halfway to the light and explosion, he stopped. Jerome had a feeling that someone was watching him. It was too dark to see anything, so he kept walking with fear inside of him. That's when he reached the clearing where the explosion went off, and

after a shrill cry coming from the woods, he felt like he should get out of there as soon as possible. Without any hesitation, he took off into the darkness. When he reached the end of the woods, he saw it! Atop the gray and foreboding hill stood a large demonic looking bird with a head too big for its body and large wings but tiny feet with razor sharp talons.

Once the bird saw Jerome, it took off like a rocket scooping him off the ground and into its razor sharp talons. As Jerome struggled, the bird's grip only tightened around his body. As fast as the owl had picked him up, it dropped him, and Jerome thought for sure he was falling thousands of feet to the ground but he didn't. He landed on top of a old and spooky castle with large circular pillars around it and an odd looking arch that looked like bars in a jail cell, but the thing that stood out the most is the large spear looking pillar that was taller than the castle as well. Jerome couldn't believe what had happened and almost stumbled off the side of the castle. Inside, the castle was a zoo with owls everywhere and it all stopped when they saw him.

Then Jerome saw what was in the monstrous creature's mouth. It was glistening in the moonlight from the hole

in the ceiling; it was the blue stone. The birds howled at him but Jerome was only focused on the stone and in an effort to get it back, he pounced at the bird and pried the bird's mouth open, the the golden rod still attached to his hand. In an instant the stone and rod fused together again. With a flash of light the golden pole and stone blew up through the hole in the roof and went miles beyond the owl's giant nest.

Then Jerome ran for the door and escaped safely. He knew which way the artifact had gone and that led him to an eerie railroad track that was cold to the touch and was engraved into the ground, but it looked as if it was abandoned. It was dark and cold and the wind seemed to be whistling through the trees. Jerome read a sign that was stuck in the ground.

It said, "Spooky Scary Skeletons Railroad Track." Against a gusty wind Jerome set off to find the stone. It was way after dusk, and the clouds filled the sky blocking out all moonlight and it looked like smoke. It was so dense, so Jerome could spot out the glowing from a mile away. After an hour, or what seemed like one, he finally found it. So he took it into his lab for testing but what awaits him may be shocking.