

Middle Schools create a supportive environment to reach all adolescent learners. Students at Titusville Middle School celebrate learning achievements AND nurture their "inner authors" through...

MIDDLE MATTERS



Student Authors



Nevaeh Fink is the daughter of Shawn Fink and Loretta Fink of Titusville. Her story "The Mystifying Curiosity" was written as part of a year long mystery story that students write in Language Arts. This issue of Middle Matters contains Chapter 1 of her story below.



Ian Hironimus is the son of Lori Ditrach and Scott Hironimus, both of Titusville. His story "The Mystery of the Cursed book" is chapter one of his mystery story. Read about Ian and his mysterious adventure in this issue of Middle Matters (right). He is patiently awaiting to begin chapter 2!

The Mystifying Curiosity

By: Nevaeh Fink

It was a cold, dark, and gloomy night. Cleo just got home after practice. Cleo's mom told her that it was dinner time. After Cleo ate her dinner, she headed toward the living room. She was excited to finally have some time to relax and to watch her favorite show. Cleo loved watching mystery movies, especially ones with monsters. Cleo's family was either in their rooms or taking a shower, so she was in the living room by herself. After Cleo had turned on the tv, she realized something was off. Cleo noticed that she was slowly feeling drained. Cleo felt as tired as a brown-throated three-toed sloth. Almost as if she was getting sucked into the television. Because the television sucked the energy out of Cleo, she passed out.

Cleo woke up it seemed hours later and found herself in a different dimension. She wasn't in the living room anymore. It was a dark and gloomy area. There was an eerie sense that it was a familiar place that she had been before. Cleo felt like she knew the place, she started to look around. That's when it hit her. It was familiar! She was inside of her favorite tv shows! Cleo remembered from the movie she was watching. The girl in the movie was trying to find her way to the witch's castle. She then realized she was in the same place as the girl from the movie.

As Cleo began to gather her thoughts, she knew that she had to follow what the girl from the movie did in order to make her way out. She thought that the castle would lead her back to her house and ultimately out of this dimension. Cleo wasn't sure on how to get to the castle but she knew that she had to find the map if she wanted to go in the right direction.

Cleo didn't know where the map could be because she hadn't gotten that far into the movie. Cleo was surrounded by a dense forest. All she knew was that the map was hidden, and she had to find it with clues around her. The first place Cleo wanted to check out was the train tracks down the bank. Against the gusty wind she made her way to the black tracks. The air howled brutally as she made her way across the tracks. Cleo saw something glistening in the moonlight, and waving in the wind. As Cleo got closer to the tracks, she realized that it was the map.

Once Cleo had picked up the map, she decided that she should follow it because it could lead her to the castle. She climbed up the bank and tried to make her way through the trees. All Cleo could see for miles ahead were trees... just a bunch of trees. Cleo saw that on the map there were three trees that were beside each other that she had to pass to make her way to the castle. She couldn't find the exact trees since there were so many. Cleo figured out that the trees were on the edge of a cliff.

As Cleo made her way through the forest, she could start to see more and more of the moon, which meant that she must be getting closer to the edge of the cliff. Once Cleo had passed the big rock shaped like a diamond, which was on the way to the three trees, she knew she must have been close.

There Cleo was standing at the edge of the cliff, looking off into the distance. An owl made a noise as it flew above Cleo. The next challenge she had to face was walking across the rickety bridge. As scary as it was, she knew that she had to walk across that bridge if she wanted

to make it to the castle. There was a huge hole in the bridge. Cleo looked down and she had realized how high up she was. She started to get dizzy and feel light headed. Right before Cleo had the chance to pass out she realized she made it across. The next obstacle was climbing up the tallest mountain to get a new clue. The mountain was so tall she felt like it was impossible to climb up it. Cleo had to remind herself, rest at the end, not in the middle.

The mountain was cold and icy. Cleo courageously climbed up the mountain. With icy fingers Cleo started to lose grip. As Cleo made her way up the mountain, she realized she saw something up in the distance. It was an isolated path that lead to a cave. Before Cleo entered the cave, she saw two stone gargoyles. Cleo was a lion when she entered the cave bravely. Inside the cave it looked as if something was living inside. A picture of the castle Cleo was trying to find was on the wall. Cleo saw a huge cauldron. That was when she remembered that not only was she trying to get to a castle where a witch lives, but she was also in a dimension where there was mostly witches and other creatures.

There was a little old lady looking at her potion shelf. Cleo knew that she could be in great danger if she went any farther into the cave, but on the map it showed that it was the only way out. Cleo thought that maybe the old lady could help her out. Cleo started to walk towards the old lady behind the cauldron. She tripped on a rock and fell to the ground. The little old lady stood up and looked around suspiciously.

To be continued....

The Mytery of the Cursed Book

By: Ian Hironimus

It was early in the morning for me to be up but it did not matter to me because today I get a new mystery book to read. I went downstairs and ran to the fridge to get breakfast. Since I was starving, I grabbed the best breakfast food I had. I grabbed the leftover waffles from Missy's and the new chocolate milk which my mom bought yesterday. I put the waffles in the microwave and ran to my mom and dad's room. I jumped on their bed and startled them awake. Right away they remembered that today I was getting a new book. They jumped out of bed and then ran to get ready.

We all ate breakfast together and then got in the car. We drove to the library and dropped me off at the doors and said, "Ian, be safe."

While they were parking the car, I ran into the library and rushed into the mystery section. I searched and searched and then I saw it, *The Mystery of The Floating Islands*. I grabbed the book and quickly read the back of the book for information. "For whoever reads this book will be pulled into the perspective of the main character and will embark on a mystery adventure. The main character will be sent on an adventure to find out why the ground is being pulled out of the ground. Will the main character be able to save the world or will the world be ripped apart?"

I ran to the checkout and checked it out. Since I was reading more of the back of the book up to my face, my mother and father both did not notice me as I was walking out. I grabbed them and we walked out together. I ran to the car and we started to go home. I opened the book and then I remembered that I get car sick easily so I decided to wait until I got home. We got home, I dashed to my room and locked the door so I would not be bothered. I opened the book and started to read.

"In a world that is far far away is a planet that is..." Suddenly, I heard something loud coming from the hallway and I got up to see what happened. The frame of the door was glowing brightly. I slowly opened the door and I was outside. I turned around to run back into my room but it was not there. I was in the middle of nowhere. The surrounding area was so odd. I was standing in a desert biome but to my left was a tundra, to my right was a rainforest, behind me was jungle, and in front of me was grasslands.

My hair blew against the gusty wind. I looked around for someone and then I saw smoke. I started to bolt toward the smoke then I realized it was moving. I slowed down and realized it was

a train. I watched the train pass and started to look for people again. Right then a snow-white owl flew over me and started to fly to the rainforest. I rushed after it to see if it would lead me to a town. I followed it to the dense forest, along an icy stream, with an eerie feeling in my stomach until I heard a person's voice.

I slowly walked to the source of the sound and hid behind a tree. It was so cold. The trees started to howl. "Hello," I said cautiously. Since my hands were cold, I blew on them. I was as quiet as a ninja with icy fingers as I slowly walked to the other side of the tree. "Hello," I said again.

"Hello," a voice said above me. I looked up and there was no one there; it was just the owl I followed. I looked around for the person and then I heard it again. "Are you looking for something?" I turned around and the owl was looking right at me.

"Are you the one talking?" I asked. The owl nodded. "Can you tell me where I can find a town?"

"Listen. Do you hear what I hear?" The owl said. I stopped for a moment and focused. I did not hear anything but then suddenly, I heard a train. I started to run to the train.

I followed along the ominous black tracks to the station in a town. I looked around and it looked like a ghost town. No one was out but then I saw a young boy. I ran up to the boy and said, "Hey boy, can I ask you something?" I saw fear and horror in his eyes. "Why are there no people in this town?"

The boy looked confused. "There are people in this town; they are just hiding." The boy's mother called for him and he ran home.

"Hiding, from what?" I asked myself. I heard the train conductor get off the train for a break since no one was getting on. I ran up to the train conductor and started asking questions to him. "Why is everyone hiding and what are they hiding from?"

The train conductor sighed. "Well, it all started about two months ago during the biggest meeting Hill Town has seen. Almost all the people in town were there waiting for the mayor to give his speech of the good news. I was going on break when the ground started to shake. Suddenly, the ground around the town hall started to crack into a circle shape and then the weirdest thing started to happen. The ground of the Town Hall was lifting into the sky, with the town hall on top, never to be seen again. To this day people have been turtles in their shells."

The conductor sighed again, "The ground keeps lifting into the sky

and no one knows why. It will be a long time before the people come out again." He looked like he was about to cry.

"But who would do such a thing?" I said.

"No one knows for sure but the town's people think it is Old Jack. He lives atop the gray and foreboding hill at the end of the road. Be careful, traveler, because if you go to his house, remember this...no one has returned from there." The conductor said in horror.

I did not want to go to the house but then I remembered my dad's favorite saying, "If there is a problem there must be a solution a person must solve." Since I am a good person, I decided to help the town. I thanked the conductor for his help and started to walk up the road. While I was walking, I saw the massive holes in the ground that must have been from the ground lifting into the sky.

I looked to my left and there it was, the biggest hole that must have been from the town hall incident. I walked a little closer and I saw the town hall sign. It must have fallen off the town hall a long time ago. I started to walk faster up the road. I saw the house but it looked more like a castle.

I started to run. I saw the gate at the front. I started to sprint. I saw the dead grass and the walls of the fence that block the grass from life like a barricade. I started to sweat. The gate opened by itself. I ran through and it felt like I ran into a wall. I fell. I gasped for air and started to walk again. It was all most like a spell was cast on the gate to stop people from running in the house. I walked to the door and knocked. No response.

I tried again. No response. I knocked one more time. The door opened fully with no one standing there for me. I peeked my head into the house and looked around. No one was there. I walked in anyway. *Bang!* The door behind me slammed shut. I turned around and the door started to lock itself. I ran to the door and tried to open it.

It did not budge so I ran to the window. It closed and locked itself as well. I was trapped! I quickly and quietly looked around and started to quiver on the steps. When all hope looked lost, the worst thing happened. The ground started to shake.

To be continued....

