

Secrets that lie in the library

"It's cold in the library today, isn't it?" Marian whispers.

"Be quiet, this is a library" Miss Eleanor, our librarian says.

I kind of feel bad for her, she's old and frail and can barely speak, I don't know why she still teaches. Marian always likes to make fun of her, I sometimes join in but it's the wrong thing to do.

"Seriously though," Marian whispered, leaning against the heavy oak circulation desk, "does she even know what year it is? Or is she still living in the times of the horse and carriage?"

I offered a weak, polite smile although an uncomfortable knot formed at the pit of my stomach. Am I a mean person now? Just making people's lives harder than it's supposed to be. Saying horrible things about people behind their back. I peer over at Miss Eleanor, she's wrapped in a giant cardigan, frayed and worn out. Her reading glasses hang on a pearl chain. Marian stares at me "You are actually feeling sorry for her, she is an old bat that needs to retire ASAP"

I stare at her with a disgusted look on my face. I couldn't believe my best friend could be so mean.

I stood up and walked away toward my favourite section of the library, fantasy. When I feel a whoosh of cold air behind my back. I whip around and see a stack of books fall over. Miss Eleanor seemed unbothered, she just glanced up and continued flipping through the pages of every book on her table. I tip-toed around the corner of the bookshelf trying to find anything suspicious but I found nothing until I felt a tap on my shoulder.

"Ahhhh" I shrieked in surprise.

"Shhhh, this is a library" Miss Eleanor screamed from her desk.

I turned around and saw a little boy made fully out of wood.

"Who are you? Why are you here? And why are you made out of wood?" I shouted / whispered.

"I'm not made out of wood, I'm a real boy" The strange boy exclaimed. His nose rapidly started to grow. And Miss Eleanor didn't tell him to be quiet.

"Why is your nose growing? And why can no one hear you?" I whispered.

"The name's Pinocchio, nice to meet you" He lingered a bit before I replied.

"Romily, but you can call me Romy for short" I said with a confused look on my face.

"Nice to meet you Romy, follow me" So called Pinocchio said.

I didn't want to go anywhere but I wanted to know where this strange boy came from and why his nose grew when he lied. I trailed behind the odd wooden boy into the part of the library I hadn't seen since kindergarten.

"Wow" I whispered, watching as fairies and talking mice scurried up and down the bindings of books and witches on broom sticks cast spells on monkeys making them fly. I witnessed paper butterflies lingering near shelves.

"We are here" Pinocchio said proudly with wide arms.

"Why don't I remember this place when I was younger?" I asked.

"When you love books they stay in your heart but when you grow you start to forget all the worlds you visited and everyone you met when you were younger" Pinocchio explained.

"I'm here now, why don't I remember you?" I asked, confused.

"You need to believe in me," he replied.

From the corner of my eye I saw the giant cardigan that Miss Eleanor was wearing. It was Miss Eleanor walking straight towards us. She smiled at me and tapped Pinocchio on his head.

"Why have you brought me here?" I queried.

"Miss Eleanor isn't just your librarian she is the guardian of the gate between reality and fantasy but her strength is withering and the villains from the fantasy world are trying to take over reality. They are getting stronger and building alliances every day. They are finding fractures in the gate to the real world and we need a warrior to save us" Pinocchio told me.

"I thought it was just a drift today when I was sitting at the circulation desk" I realised.

"We think you could save us, be our warrior," Miss Eleanor told me.

"Why?" I questioned.

"When Marian was making fun of me you walked away and didn't join in. You are the only person in this library that respects me," Miss Eleanor explained.

"Follow me" She directed.

Miss Eleanor took a large book off the top shelf and opened it. It had golden dust all over it and a big portal appeared. Pinocchio stepped right into it and Miss Eleanor grabbed my hand and we stepped into the portal.

As the gold dust swirled around us the scent of dusty old books got overtaken by the crisp, pine scented air of an enchanted forest. I gripped Miss Eleanor's hand tightly as I glanced up at the giant castle in front of me.

"This is my home," Pinocchio whispered. His nose returned to its normal size and he smiled at me.

"Welcome our warrior" Miss Eleanor exclaimed as her frayed oversized cardigan melted away and revealed a star stitched, floor length cloak.

"You are here because the dark fairy tales have aligned. Captain Hook and The Wicked Witch of The West are merging their stories to shatter. the gateway between realms.

"What can I do?" I asked, staring at my sneakers.

"Believe in yourself and your imagination will become a weapon

Before I could answer a dark blanket descended on the forest. A pack of flying monkeys flew from the canopy, cackling loudly. The clanging of pirates hooks in the distance.

"To the forest" Miss Eleanor urged.

We sprinted through the forest, my shoelaces getting caught on sticks and the soles of my shoes slipping on wet moss.

"In here" Pinocchio whispered, pointing to a large oak tree.

He dived under the ancient tree roots, me and Miss Eleanor not far behind him. We were all crouched down under this giant tree terrified. We saw the shadows of tall men with knives.

"Find the librarian, the portal is open and she is not strong enough to close it, bring her to me and the girl too" A man bellowed. We heard a bunch of pirates spread around the forest probably searching for us.

"What do we do?" I questioned. Leaning against the hard oak walls.

"They are using dark magic," Miss Eleanor explained.

Just as she said that a green hand with long black nails peeked through the roots and her hand stopped a fraction of an inch away from my jaw.

"Gotcha now you little rascals" A croaky voice screamed.

Miss Eleanor shot a blast of magic toward the back of the roots.

"RUN!" She shouted.

Me and Pinocchio climbed out and started running. I imagined a big cloth blinding the wicked witch of the west who was attacking Miss Eleanor. Suddenly we heard a loud shriek. A canvas sheet had taken the green lady down and she fell into the creek behind her.

"It worked," Pinocchio exclaimed. "You can do anything now"

Our triumph was out lived. The thuds of heavy leather boots come closer.

"Chop him down. The librarian is puffed, bring me the girl" Hook roared. We couldn't move, there were pirates all around us. Miss Eleanor emerged from the roots. The golden portal looked like spiderwebs with cracks all over it.

"I can't hold it any longer, they are rewriting their fairytales. You need to write an ending" Miss Eleanor shouted.

"How, I'm just a kid!" I screamed as the pirate's circle grew smaller.

"You are a reader, you know how books work, think about all the magic you spent years reading about" Pinocchio said with a fierce look on his face.

I closed my eyes, I imagined soldiers that can take down anything and a gust of wind that can sink a fleet of ships.

Believe I told myself

Make it real

When I opened my eyes a gold shield came from the ground and covered me and Pinocchio from all danger.

Hook stepped back in fear. "What is this sorcery?"

I didn't reply, I just focused on mending the gate. I imagined the gold dust acting like glue, sealing all the cracks between reality and fiction.

"The gate is sealing," Miss Eleanor exclaimed. In one more wave of magic she defeated all the pirates and put them all back in their own stories.

"Go back to your world," She told me.

Pinocchio grabbed my arm.

"Thankyou for believing in me, please don't forget about me when you grow up" he pleaded.

“Bye” I shouted.

I walked into the portal and dropped right into where I met Pinocchio. I walked up to Miss Eleanor. She looked up and smiled at me.

“Don’t stop reading” she said “We will always need a warrior”

I nodded and smiled.