

The Clay Vase

It was a complete coincidence. I have forever known the forest behind my tattered house like the back of my hand. What held my memory the most is a young birch sapling on the right of an old oak tree. I had planted it myself when I was 6, with the help of my parents. It was no older than 15 years and the oak 100. The oak had a bluebird nest on it with 3 shiny eggs in it. I feed the parents oats every day, sometimes with nuts. But today was different.

As I continued my daily routine of walking over to the nest to feed the bluebirds, I glanced inside the nest. Gone! There were no birds in there! This has never happened before, not once in a millenia.

I took a worried look around and spotted the father standing on a branch of a small blueberry shrub.

I ran to the bush, but for some reason a thought in my mind told me to run in a 's' shape.

At the second curve of the 's', the ground beneath me caved in and swallowed me with it. As my eyes adjusted to the darkness, I saw a clay vase standing still on a huge chunk of what could only be gold. It seemed to have runes on it. I reached out my hand and touched the vase. The 'runes' glowed blue. It was then I realised that they are in fact not runes, but letters. English letters.

It reads: "take the gold or find the riddle and solve it for a greater treasure. You may only leave with one prize or face the penalty." I looked around, and sure enough, I found a notebook's page stuck under the slab of gold and pulled it out with surprising ease. It read: "I am a 1 story house. Everything in me is painted the colour of the only crystal that has the same starting letter as its color. The color is of the rainbow. What color are my stairs? Find the holes corresponding to each color in the walls and slide the paper in one. get it wrong, and be stuck here forever. Get it right, and leave with the treasure. There are 8 in total."

My mind raced with questions, but one stood above it all; are there not only seven colors the rainbow has? I searched the walls and found seven holes, each with a different dash of paint above them. Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. But where was the eighth? And what colour is the crystal the riddle was talking about? The crystal's color has to be the answer, right? My mind thought of all the crystals. Amethyst, Jasper, Quartz, Aquamarine, Ruby, Wait! Rubies and red! All of the house's furniture is red so the stairs have to be red! I read the riddle one last time but this time something else caught my eye.

It was the first sentence. "I am a one story house". But one story houses don't have stairs! That explains the eighth hole! I frantically search the walls for the eighth hole, but it is nowhere to be found. Then I realised something. The riddle said 'find the holes corresponding to each colour in the walls', but the eighth hole isn't a colour. So it has to be on the ground. In the farthest corner of the cave, under the colour green was an unnamed hole. Without hesitation, I slid the riddle down the hole and I heard the sound of gears turning and clinking as if an ancient monstrosity was coming back to life.

The ground beneath me parted and I fell in, only to realise I was being lifted up along with a rusty locked chest. I wondered: 'where was the key?' At that moment, as if I had jinxed it, the key fell down hard on my head before falling to the ground. The chest was surprisingly as light as a feather. Filled with excitement, I carried it back home and showed my parents. The key fit perfectly and we lifted up the lid. Inside was another yellowed sheet of paper and it described the origin of this particular chest, along with a smaller chest and its key.

The paper said that this chest was buried in 1947 by a soviet soldier who had the privilege to see the remains of the legendary amber room along with taking a little souvenir as a token of victory. He had no family of his own and decided not to give it away. So what was in the smaller chest? That's a little secret for my family to keep.

The End