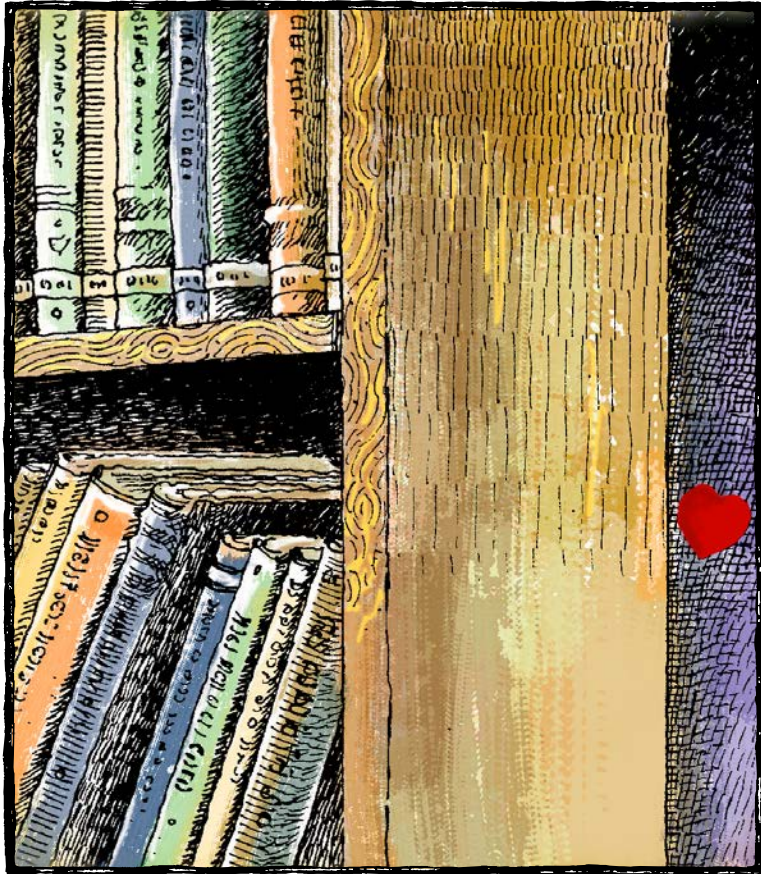


The Mystery of Granville Library

A Reading A-Z Level W Leveled Book

Word Count: 2,400

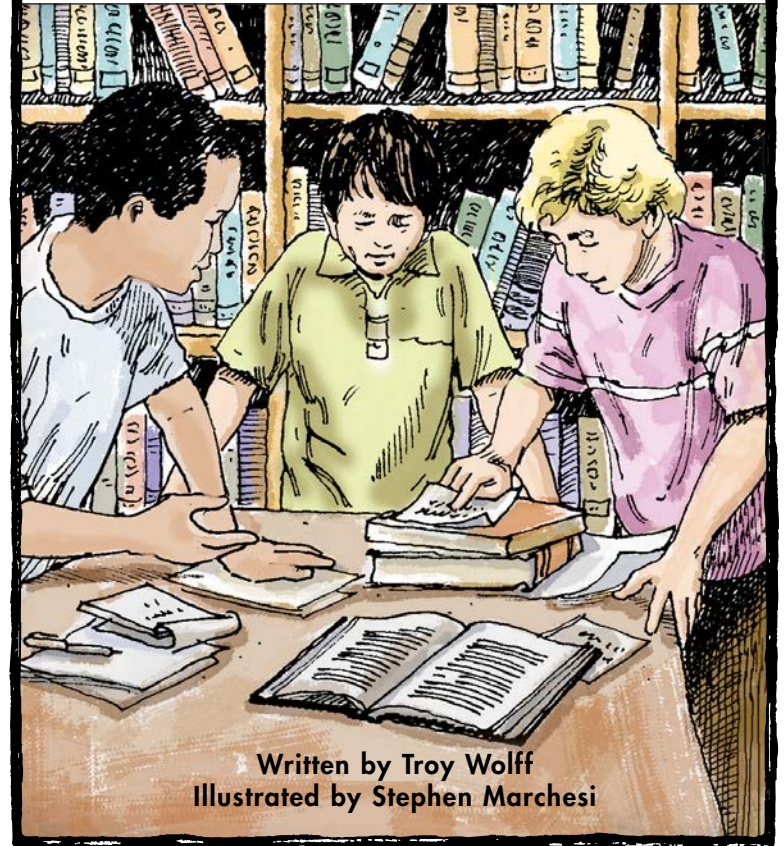


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The Mystery of Granville Library



Written by Troy Wolff
Illustrated by Stephen Marchesi

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The Mystery of Granville Library

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Correlation

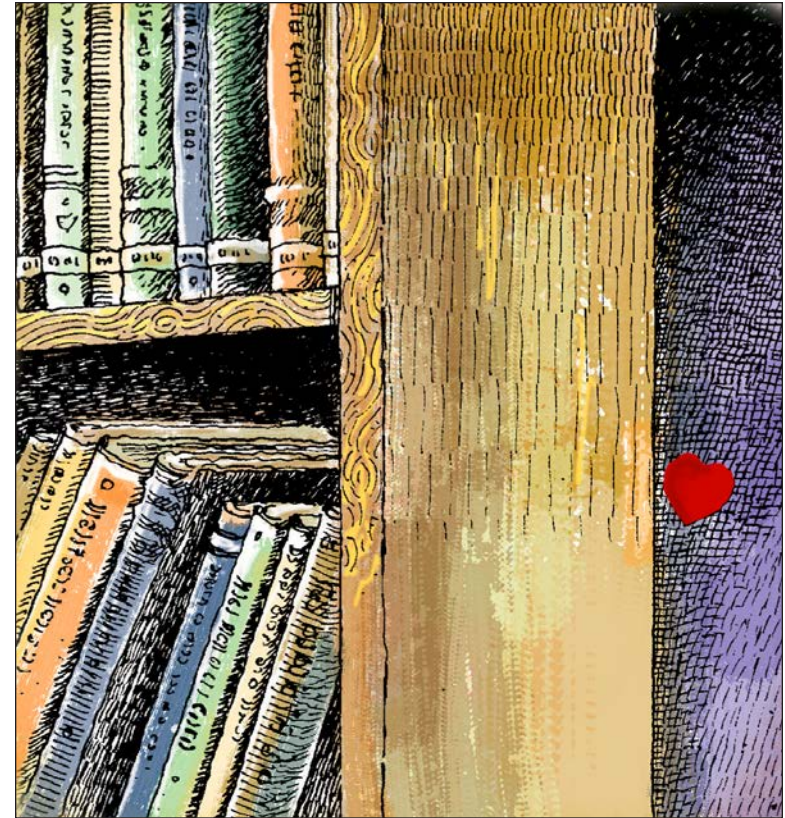
LEVEL W

Fountas & Pinnell	S
Reading Recovery	40
DRA	40



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Prologue

Sometimes the best things in life are hidden from us, and they will not appear unless we search them out. But, if we notice the clues around us and never give up our search, life's **mysteries** will reveal their **secrets** to us. This is the story of Daniel and his friends, who **discovered** just such a mystery—the mystery of Granville library.

King Arthur's Clue

"Hey Daniel, I found it!" Yuri whispered urgently.

"Are you sure?" Daniel asked.

"Yeah. *King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table*. That's the one, isn't it?" Yuri asked.

"Yes. That's it. Let me see it," Daniel answered.

Daniel, Yuri, and Bennett were searching the Granville School library shelves after classes ended for the day. They were always looking for new books to read, but today Daniel was looking for a book that Yuri's mom suggested. She knew that Daniel would like the stories of King Arthur, which were full of knights, castles, battles, and honor.

"Excellent, Yuri. Thank you," Daniel said as he took the book from his friend's hands. "I'm going to look through this. I'll meet you guys a bit later."

Yuri and Bennett headed off to the new book section of the library. They were always reading, each with their own interests. Daniel had met Yuri and Bennett at the public library when their moms had brought them for story hour. The three boys had been best friends ever since.

Daniel sat at one of the tables and placed his new **treasure** in front of him. The book's cover was faded to reddish brown with age, and the title had nearly disappeared. When he opened it, a faint smell of dust and ink emerged, like a closet full of newspapers on a warm day. Daniel flipped the first pages aside until he reached the **copyright** date. He always liked to know when books were published.

"Wow," he whispered to himself. "1959!" That was the year Daniel's grandfather started teaching at Granville.

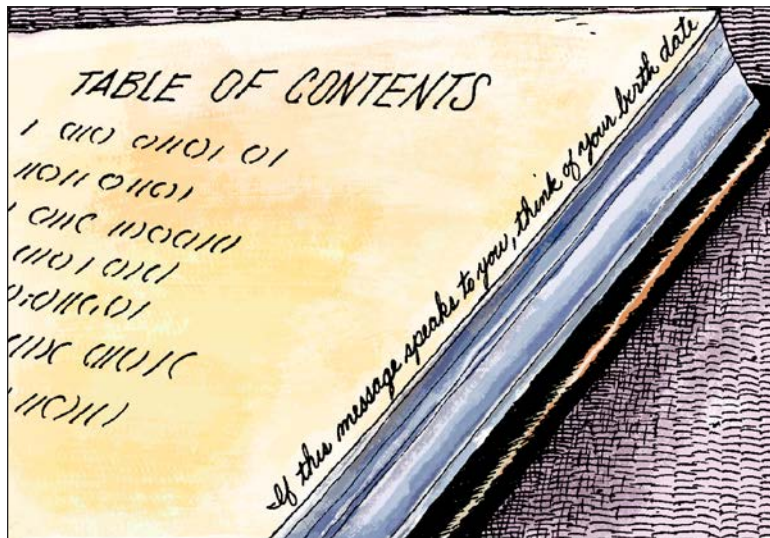
Daniel turned another page to the table of contents. As he scanned down the list of chapter titles, he was surprised to see a message lightly handwritten in pencil along the **binding**. The message read: *Do All Nations Impose Equal Laws?*



At first, Daniel thought a bored student had scribbled in the book during class. As he looked closer at the message, a familiar **pattern** appeared. Since Daniel had learned to read, he had played word games: crossword puzzles, word finds, and especially **acrostics**, where the first letter of a series of words spells out a new word. Daniel reread the message and saw a new meaning—his name:

Do All Nations Impose Equal Laws?

His vision shifted, taking in the rest of the page. Another handwritten message appeared in tiny letters along the right edge of the page: *If this message speaks to you, think of your birth date.*



Birth Dates and Family Trees

Daniel heard footsteps behind him.

“Daniel, how’s the book?” Bennett quietly asked, walking up beside him with a couple of books in his hands.

“You guys! Look at this!” Daniel whispered. Yuri and Bennett leaned close to look at the page.

“Big deal,” Yuri said. “So someone wrote in a library book. It’s not the end of the world.”

“Ha! It would be if Mrs. Montoya caught them!” Bennett chuckled softly. As Granville librarian, Mrs. Montoya strictly enforced the rules, which the boys knew from talking too loudly about books they enjoyed.

“No, look closer at the message,” Daniel urged. As his friends crowded around him, Daniel showed them the acrostic spelling out his name. Then he pointed to the message at the bottom.

“So, what do you think?” he asked.

“Well, what’s your birthday?” Yuri answered.

“January eleventh,” Daniel responded. They all looked at the table of contents to see any signs of January or birthdays, but nothing seemed to match up.

Daniel took out a pen and paper and began making notes to himself. A moment later, he dropped the pen.

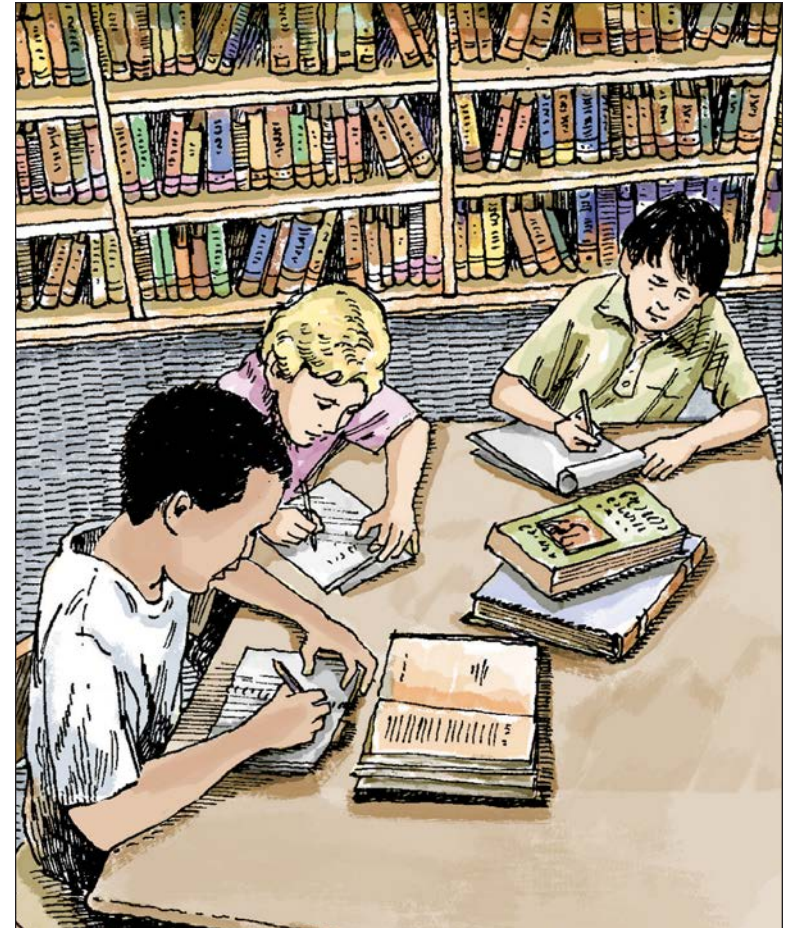
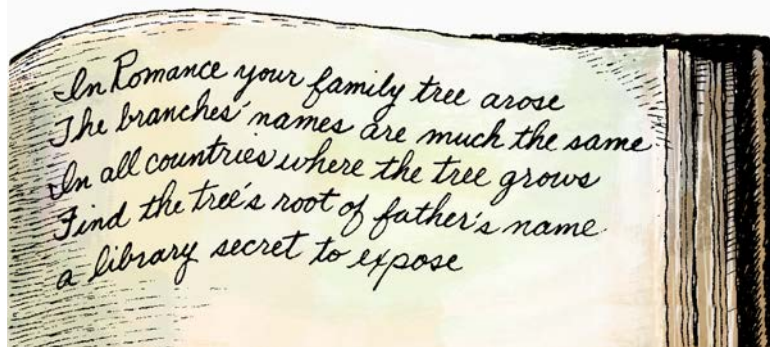
“I think I have it!”

“Shhh!” Yuri warned, looking for Mrs. Montoya. “What is it?” he asked quietly.

“Forget the word January,” Daniel said. “Look what happens if I just give my birth date in numerals: 1/11.”

Yuri and Bennett saw that chapter four began on page 111. Nodding to his friends, Daniel quickly flipped the yellowing pages to 111. The boys scanned the page for a message.

“Here!” Daniel whispered, pointing to neat, tiny handwriting, this time at the top of the page. Daniel turned the book so his friends could easily read the message. This message was longer, and written as a poem:



“What do you think of this?” Daniel asked.

“It doesn’t make any sense right now,” Bennett replied.

“I have an idea,” Daniel said. “Let’s each copy the poem down and take it home tonight. We’ll meet here tomorrow at the same time and compare notes.”

Getting to the Root of the Matter

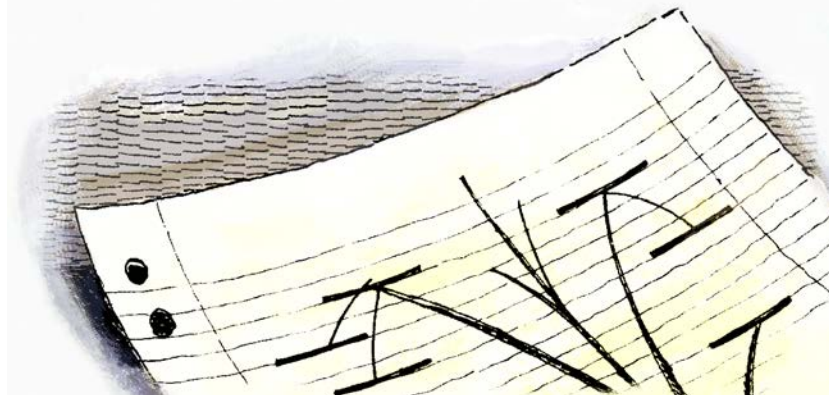
Right after classes, Daniel, Yuri, and Bennett gathered around the familiar library table and pulled out their notes.

“Man, I thought about this **riddle** for hours last night,” Yuri complained, shaking his head.

“Me too,” Bennett agreed. “So, what did you come up with?” he asked Yuri.

“Well, I kept thinking about the word ‘romance’ and family trees. The only romance in a family tree would be between a mother and father, right?” he asked. “So, I decided that the main branches of that tree would be the mother and the father.”

“I thought the same thing,” agreed Bennett. “But what about the line about branches’ names are similar in whatever country that tree grows?”



“I think the key is the word ‘romance,’” Daniel offered. “But not in the dating sense.”

“What do you mean?” Bennett asked.

“The word *Romance* in the poem is capitalized,” Daniel said. “Do you remember what my grandfather taught at Granville?”

“That’s right!” Yuri said, quietly snapping his fingers.

“He taught Romance languages—Latin, French, Italian, and Spanish,” Daniel continued. “They are called Romance languages because they share similar structures. That would explain why, in the poem, the branches’ names are similar in different countries.”

“Yeah,” Yuri said. “You’re right! The words for *mother* and *father* in those languages are nearly the same: *madre*, *mère*, and *mater* for *mother*, and *padre*, *père*, and *pater* for *father*.”





“Right,” Daniel agreed. “So then I noticed the line about the root of the tree and father’s name.”

“The root of all Romance languages is Latin,” Bennett interrupted.

“Exactly.” Daniel answered. “So, I think the answer to this riddle is the Latin root for the word *father*.”

“The word *pater* sounds like the answer to the riddle,” Yuri said.

“The question is,” Bennett said, “what does *pater* have to do with this mystery?”

Who Is Pater?

The three friends came up with nothing on the word *pater*. Finally, they decided to ask the librarian, Mrs. Montoya. After all, they reasoned, the riddle did mention a secret in the library. However, they agreed not to tell Mrs. Montoya about all the messages. She would not appreciate writing in books even if it was a puzzle to solve.

Mrs. Montoya told the boys of a famous book called *The Renaissance* by a writer named Walter Pater. It was about the greatest painters and poets at the end of the **Middle Ages**, and the library had a copy of the book.

Anxious to find *The Renaissance*, the three went to the library’s computerized book catalog. They typed in the title, *The Renaissance* and, sure enough, found the book written by Walter Pater. Noting the location, they strode over to the shelf where the book should be and began **scanning** the rows for the name to appear.





“Here it is!” Bennett whispered excitedly. Yuri and Daniel rushed over as Bennett pulled the book from the shelf. They looked it over for any signs of a new message. Seeing nothing on the outside of the book, Daniel told Bennett to open up to the table of contents, just like before. Scanning this page, they searched for the familiar penciled handwriting. This time, they found no words. However, they did notice one chapter title underlined in pencil. The title was called “Andrea Del Sarto.”

“Del Sarto was the name of the principal of Granville when my grandfather worked here,” Daniel said.

“So, go to that chapter,” Yuri urged.

“Okay, okay,” Bennett whispered as he flipped the pages. At the beginning of the “Del Sarto” chapter, the boys once again saw the neat, small handwriting in the margin. The short note read, *Look above your father’s name. The answer lies there.*

“What do you think that means?” Yuri asked, looking over Daniel’s shoulder.

“Well, my Dad’s name is Virgil,” Daniel answered, now convinced that these messages were directed at him.

“Hey, we just talked about Virgil in class last month. He wrote a long, famous poem called *The Aeneid*. It’s all about the founding of Rome by some guy named Aeneas,” Bennett said.

“Okay, let’s find *The Aeneid*,” Daniel said.



Virgil Reveals a Secret

A few minutes later, they found Virgil's *The Aeneid* and excitedly pulled the book from the shelf. As before, they looked at the table of contents for new messages. This time, however, they saw nothing. Daniel scanned through the first pages of the book without finding anything. After several minutes of useless searching, all three of them slumped down on the carpet between the tall shelves.

"This can't be right," Yuri complained. "We can't have followed all those messages to run into a **dead end** like this."

"Yuri, didn't you write down the last message?" Daniel asked.

"Yes, here it is," Yuri answered, pulling a scrap of paper out of his pocket.

Daniel reread the message, and a smile broke across his face. "We didn't read the message closely enough," Daniel said. "It told us the answer is *above* my father's name."



Bennett reached into the shelves where the book had sat. He closed his eyes as he felt along the bottom of the shelf that sat just above "The Aeneid." His hand stopped, he opened his eyes and smiled at Yuri and Daniel. Then he pulled down a dark brown envelope that had been glued to the underside of the shelf. Written in the handwriting of all the other messages was one word: "Daniel."

Yuri and Bennett watched as Daniel, with trembling fingers, opened the envelope. Inside was a letter:

Daniel, my boy, if you are reading this, then you have solved the mystery of Granville library, probably with help from Yuri and Bennett—I am so proud of you. The clues were not easy to follow; only students who think carefully, love language, and notice the tiniest details would be able to arrive at this point. Boys, I watched your love of reading grow from when you were very small. I placed these clues, knowing that if your love of reading continued to grow you would unlock the secret. To discover the great prize that awaits you, find Mr. Slovak, the custodian, and simply say, "We seek the heart of Granville." Say it exactly this way, and he will show you the rest.

*Love,
Grandpa*

The Heart of Granville

The boys found themselves following Mr. Slovak through long corridors crammed with cleaning supplies, broken desks, and surplus library shelves. At the end of the corridor they entered a crowded, dusty, unlocked storage room. It was dark and packed with library shelves and stacks of books. Mr. Slovak stopped at a large bookshelf against the back wall and faced the boys.

“Here it is,” he said. “Everything else you’ll find inside. And, of course, we’ll never say one word of this to anyone else.” He then pulled the shelf away from the wall.

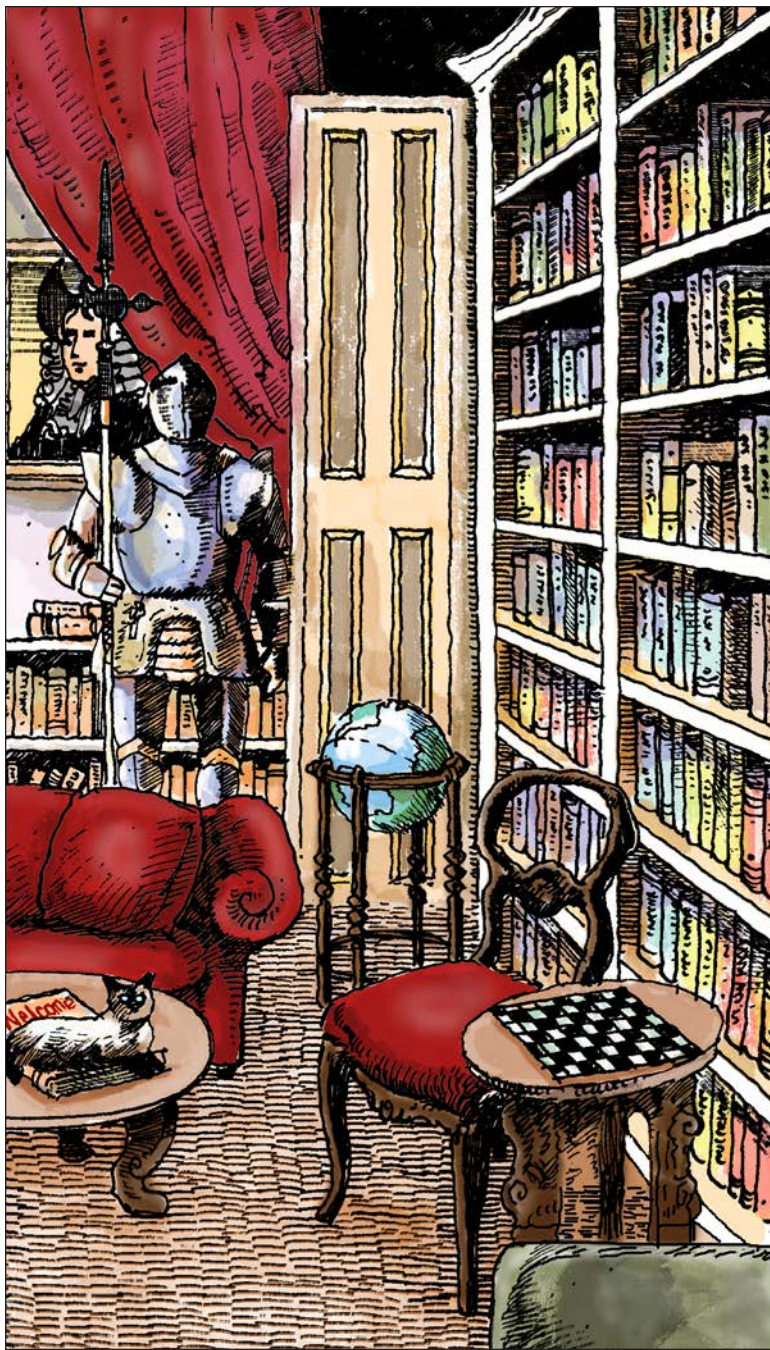
The boys crowded around and noticed a small heart painted in dark red on the wall behind the shelf. Mr. Slovak pressed on the heart, and the boys heard a clicking of a lock. Immediately the outlines of a small door appeared in the wall. Daniel, Yuri, and Bennett looked at each other with nervous smiles. “Mr. Slovak, should we . . .,” but before they could finish, he vanished.

“Well, here we go,” Daniel whispered, as he pressed on the secret door.

The door opened up to a large room sunken several feet below them, at the foot of wide wooden stairs. It was the room of their dreams: Huge, overstuffed red velvet couches and chairs were scattered around, chessboards and checkerboards made of polished wood and ivory sat on dark wood tables throughout. A full suit of armor from a medieval knight stood staring at them from the corner. A Siamese cat leaped down off of one of the sofas and began purring. Old maps of Africa and Asia were framed on the walls. Bookshelves lined the room, but these were not like the ordinary bookshelves above in the library. All of these books were leather-bound works from **decades** ago, names the boys had never heard of. But something about the titles promised exciting mysteries and great adventures.

Sitting on the table in the center of the room, Daniel noticed a large, leather book. In red letters on the cover was the word “Welcome.”





They walked over, opened it up, and read the message inside:

Greetings Friends,

Welcome to the secret reading room. You share a great privilege with the wisest students of Granville. When the Granville School was first built in 1880, the founder, Weston Granville, had this room added as a secret reading room for only the most observant students who loved reading. He decreed that to gain access a student had to solve a series of clues planted by a Granville teacher.

Whenever a teacher finds a student who loves reading, they create a pathway of complex clues. You are here because a teacher at Granville saw promise in you, and you succeeded.

This room is yours to enjoy for as long as you stay at Granville. But know this: you must keep the secret. If you tell anyone about the room, it will be shut forever. Mr. Granville demanded this in the will of the school. Only those who earn the privilege of the secret room may enjoy it.

So, congratulations! You have solved the mystery of Granville library.



Glossary

- acrostics** (*n.*) a group of words in which certain letters in each line or word, when taken in order, spell out other words (p. 7)
- binding** (*n.*) the cover or fastenings of a book (p. 6)
- catalog** (*n.*) a list of names, titles, or other items arranged in a system, usually in a book, computer database, or magazine (p. 14)
- copyright** (*n.*) the legal right to publish and sell a work, usually indicated by a date when the right was granted (p. 6)
- dead end** (*n.*) an end with no way out (p. 17)
- decades** (*n.*) periods of 10 years (p. 20)
- discovered** (*v.*) found for the first time (p. 4)
- Middle Ages** (*n.*) a period of European history spanning 1,000 years, between AD 500 and AD 1500 (p. 14)
- mysteries** (*n.*) things that are not explained, or are beyond understanding (p. 4)
- pattern** (*n.*) lines, forms, or figures used in a predictable arrangement (p. 7)
- riddle** (*n.*) a puzzle or question to be solved (p. 11)
- scanning** (*v.*) looking over quickly (p. 14)
- secrets** (*n.*) things kept hidden from others (p. 4)
- treasure** (*n.*) something valuable or prized (p. 6)