

# The Mystery of Manor Hall

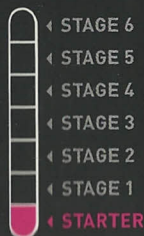


Manor Hall is an old dark house with a mystery. Nobody can go into the music room. But one night Tom and Milly hear something. The noise is coming from the music room.

Tom and Milly open the door. Someone in the music room is singing. Tom and Milly are afraid, but they can't move.

Can Tom and Milly discover the mystery of Manor Hall?

(Word count 1,390)



◀ STAGE 6  
◀ STAGE 5  
◀ STAGE 4  
◀ STAGE 3  
◀ STAGE 2  
◀ STAGE 1

◀ **STARTER**

250 Headwords



CRIME & MYSTERY



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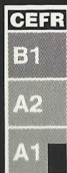


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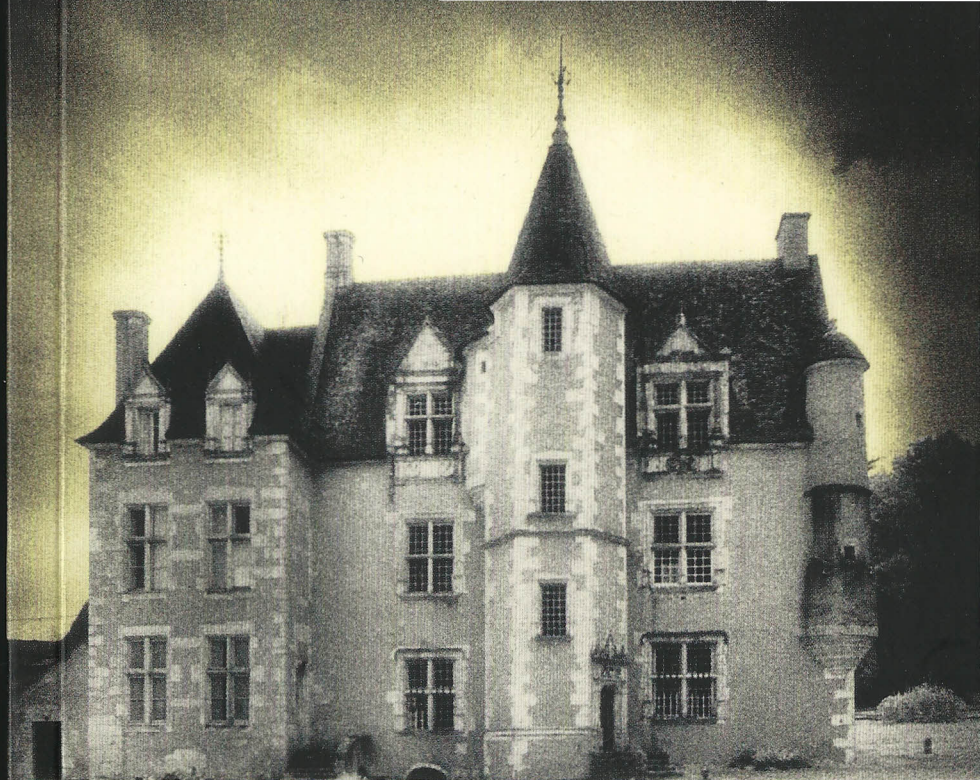
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# The Mystery of Manor Hall

JANE CAMMACK

STARTER

OXFORD BOOKWORMS

STARTER

## THE MYSTERY OF MANOR HALL

Tom and Milly are staying at Manor Hall with Uncle Henry. Uncle Henry doesn't like teenagers, and he sometimes looks angry. Manor Hall is an old dark house with a mystery. There is a beautiful music room. But the music room is always locked and has 'Do Not Enter' on the door.

One evening there is a full moon. At midnight Tom and Milly hear something. They can hear someone singing, and the noise is coming from the music room.

Who is singing in the music room?

What is the mystery of Manor Hall?



JANE CAMMACK

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# The Mystery of Manor Hall



*Illustrated by*  
Jérôme Mireault



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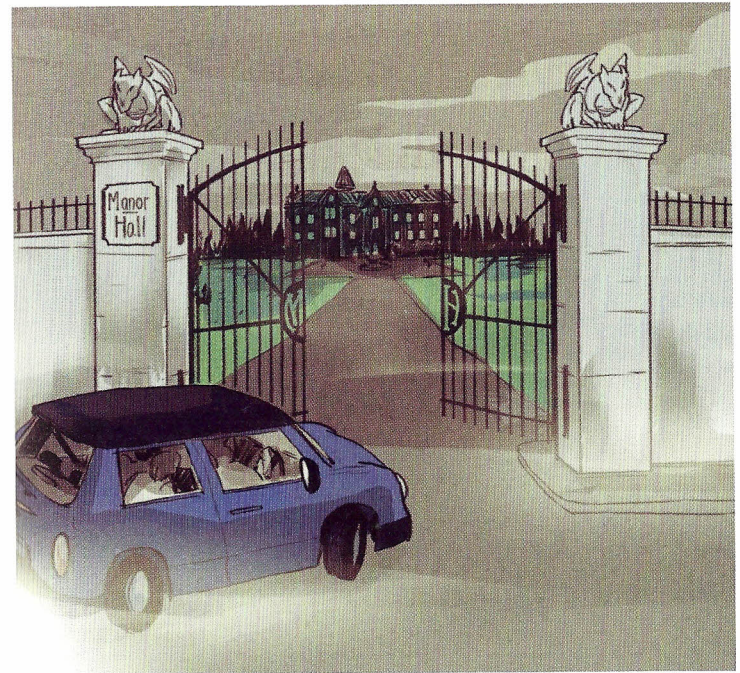
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# The Mystery of Manor Hall



‘We don’t want to stay with Uncle Henry, Mum.’ The boy with dark hair and blue eyes takes his mobile phone out of his pocket. ‘Grandma says he doesn’t like teenagers.’

His mother shakes her head and Tom looks out the window again. The car goes left. The sign on the gate says ‘Manor Hall’.

‘Manor Hall,’ says the beautiful girl sitting next to her brother Tom. ‘Does Uncle Henry live here?’





Her mother hears what Milly says. 'Henry is strange, but he's nice, too.'

'Can't we come to the new house with you, Mum? We can help,' Milly asks.

'No, Milly,' says her mum. 'There aren't any beds in the new house.'

The car stops. 'Here we are,' says Mum.

The house is very old and dark. There are lots of small windows. Milly is afraid.



A man opens the door. He is old and he has got white hair and big eyebrows. He looks at Tom and Milly with his grey eyes.

'You're late,' he says. 'Come in.'

'Sorry,' says Tom. 'I'm Tom. How do you do?'

The old man looks angry.

'And I'm Milly,' says Milly. 'Your house is very big.'

'It is,' says Uncle Henry. 'You can explore, but there is one room where you can't go.'



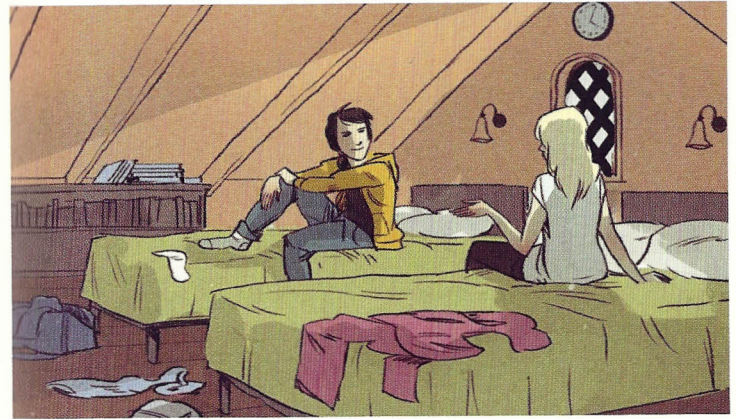
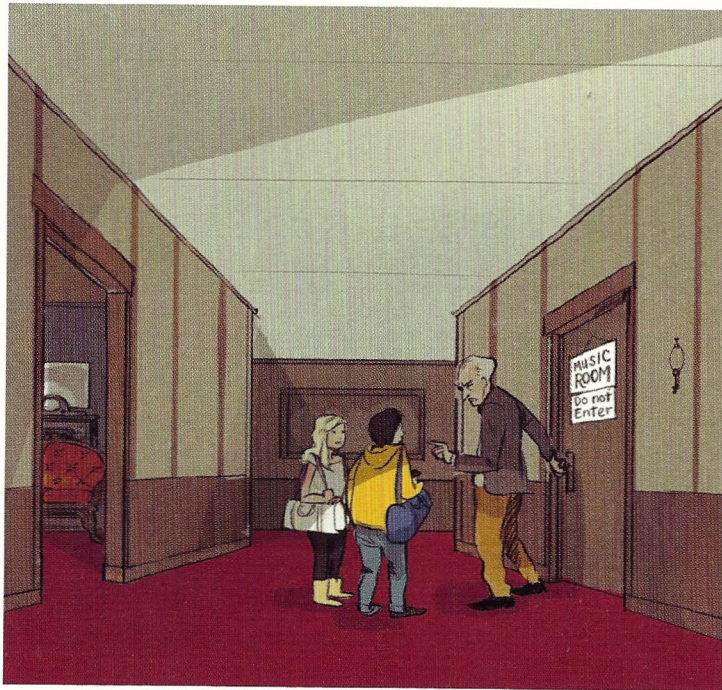
They walk along a corridor and see a sitting room where there are beautiful sofas, and pictures on the walls.

Then they come to a door.

'This is the music room,' says Uncle Henry. There is a sign on the door. It says 'Do Not Enter'.

'Why can't we go in there?' asks Milly. 'I can play the piano, and I love music.'

Uncle Henry shakes his head. 'I can't tell you. But never open this door!'

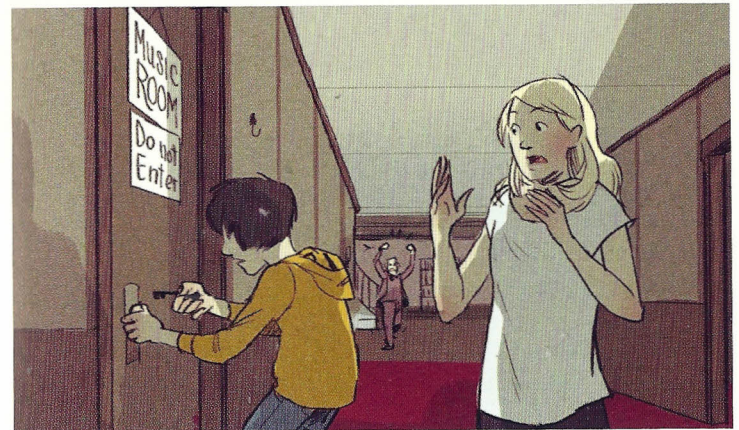


'What a strange man,' Tom says when they are in their bedroom. 'Why can't we go into the music room?'

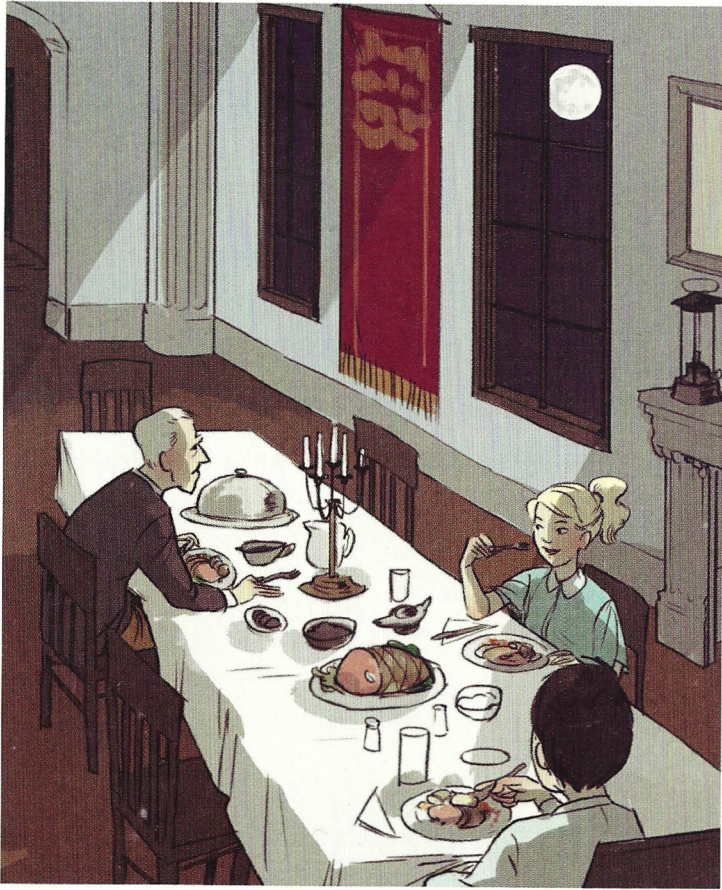
But Milly isn't listening. 'Let's explore!' she says.

Tom and Milly walk up and down and open doors. Then they come to the music room. Tom is about to open the door when Uncle Henry sees them.

'Get away from there!' shouts Uncle Henry.







Later, when they are having dinner in the dining room, Uncle Henry is very quiet.

‘Are you angry with us?’ asks Milly.

Uncle Henry doesn’t answer. He shakes his head. Then he says, ‘There’s a full moon tonight.’

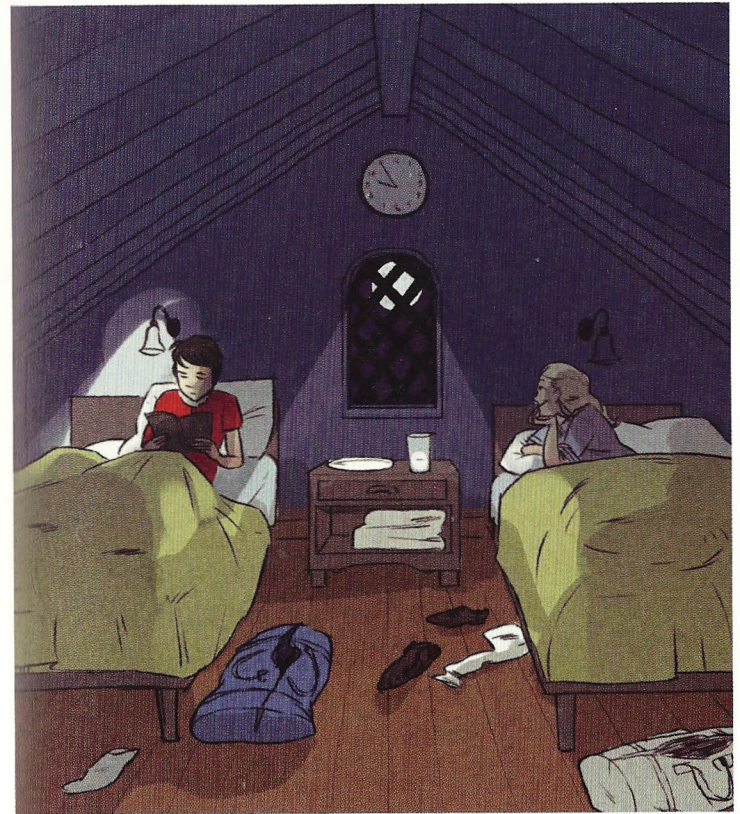
He gets up and looks out the window. ‘Lock your bedroom door,’ he says, ‘and don’t open it.’

‘I don’t understand,’ Milly says to Tom. ‘Why does Uncle Henry look at the moon? Why can’t we go into the music room? It’s a mystery.’

Tom isn’t listening. He’s reading a book.

‘I want to explore,’ Tom says suddenly.

‘We can’t!’ says Milly.







It's midnight and Milly wakes up. It's very dark in the bedroom and she can hear a noise. She gets out of bed and goes to her brother's bed.

'Tom, Tom,' she says and shakes his arm. Tom opens his eyes. 'Milly, it's late. Go back to bed.' He closes his eyes again.

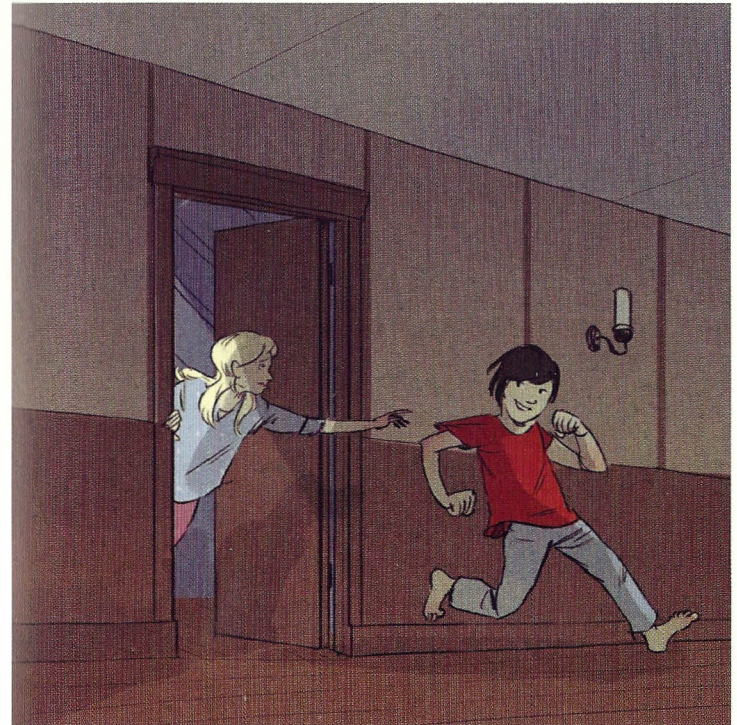
'No, Tom, get up! There's a strange noise.'

Tom goes to the door and listens. 'You're right,' he says to Milly. 'I can hear someone singing.'

'Can Uncle Henry sing?' Milly asks Tom. Tom laughs, 'Let's see.' He opens the door.

'No!' Milly says. 'There's a full moon. We can't go out.'

'You can stay here, but I want to see who's singing at midnight.' Tom opens the door and they run into the corridor.





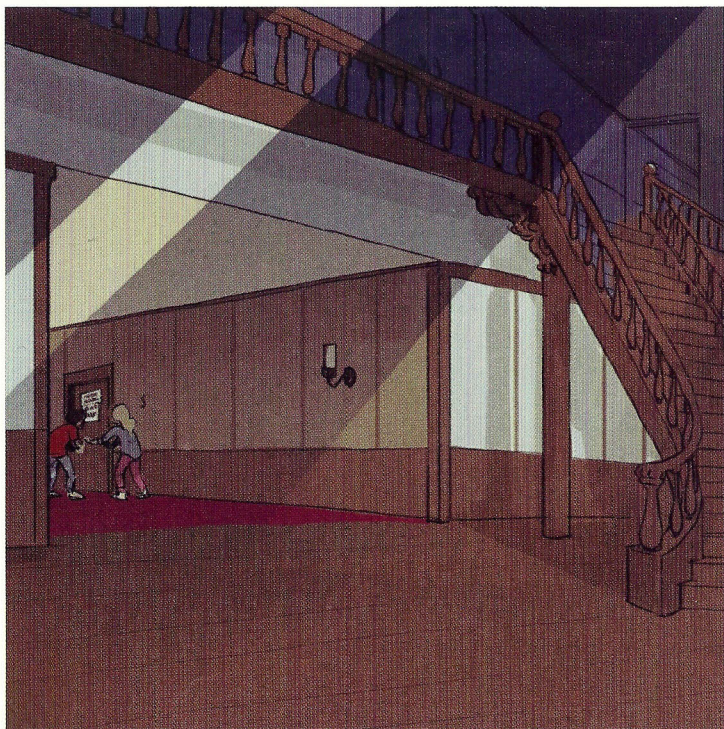
'Someone is singing in the music room,' says Milly.

'You're right,' says Tom. 'It's a man and he's singing a song about the sea.'

'It's beautiful,' says Milly. 'Is it Uncle Henry?'

Tom isn't listening. He opens the door of the music room and goes in.

'Don't, Tom!' says Milly. 'We can't go into the music room!'



The music room is very big and Milly is afraid.

'We haven't got much time before Uncle Henry hears us,' she says.

Tom puts the light on and the singing stops.

In the music room there's a piano and there are lots of pictures on the wall. But Uncle Henry isn't there. Milly wants to go.





On one wall there is a very big picture of a ship. Milly and Tom look at the picture and they can see that the sea is moving. They can hear the water.

There is a man standing on the ship. He has got long black hair and a black hat. He is singing a song about the sea. He's a pirate.



Tom and Milly are afraid, but they can't move. The pirate looks at them. He stops singing and he smiles. Suddenly he comes out of the picture and into the music room.

'Help!' shouts Milly.





Milly looks at the handsome pirate. He has a big hat, and is very white.

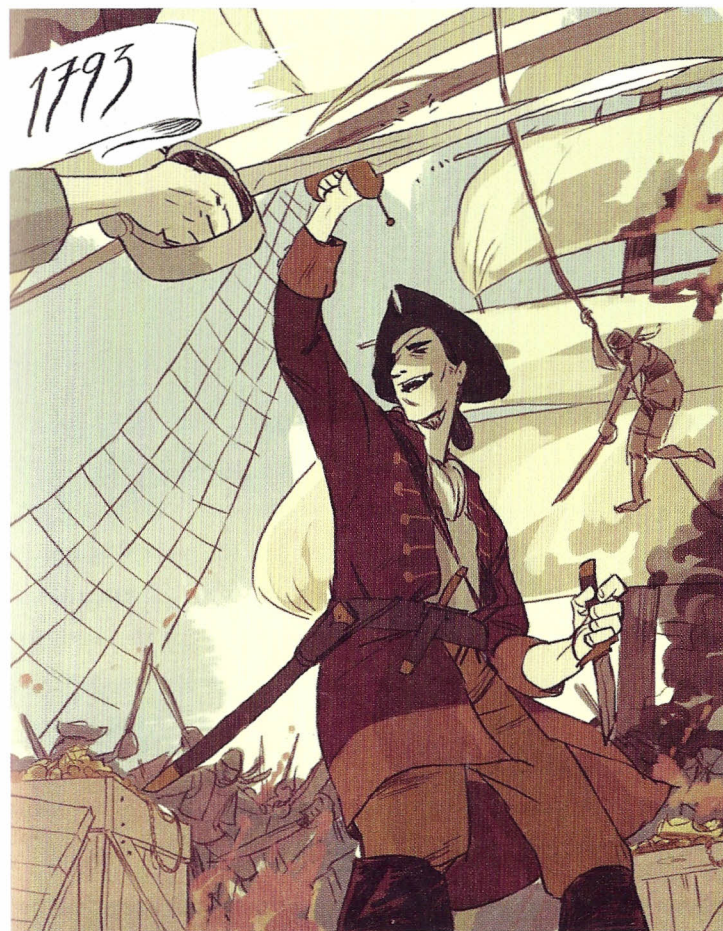
‘He’s a ghost,’ she says in a quiet voice to Tom. ‘Tom, let’s go.’

Tom doesn’t answer. The pirate is near the door so they can’t go.

‘Who’s in my music room?’ the pirate shouts. ‘This is my room!’

‘You’re right,’ says Tom. ‘This is your music room and we’re going to bed.’

The pirate shakes his head. ‘Oh no you’re not! Sit down. I’m going to tell you my story.’



‘My name is William Bones, but everyone calls me Billy,’ says the pirate.

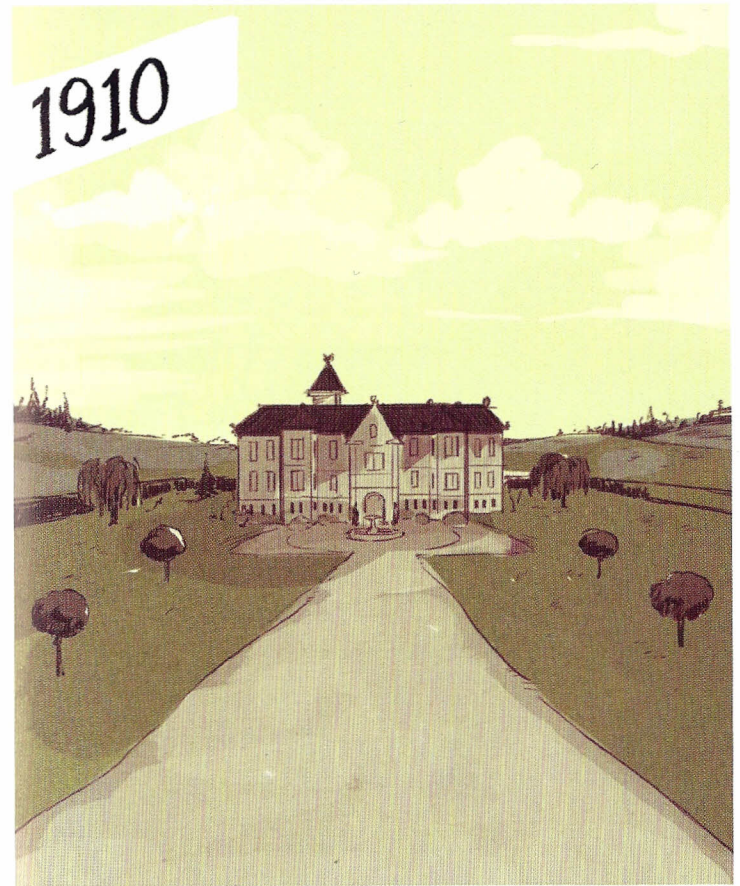
‘The year is 1793. My men and I sail the seven seas in my ship *The Pearl*. We fight pirate ships and we sing songs about the sea. We are very happy because we have lots of treasure.’





“Then one day I help an old woman and she paints a picture of my ship. “This picture’s magic,” she tells me. “Before you die, put it in a house near the sea. When you die and the moon is full, your ghost can sail your ship for one night.” Then the old woman looks at me and she says, “Pirate Billy Bones, remember that the picture must be near the sea.””

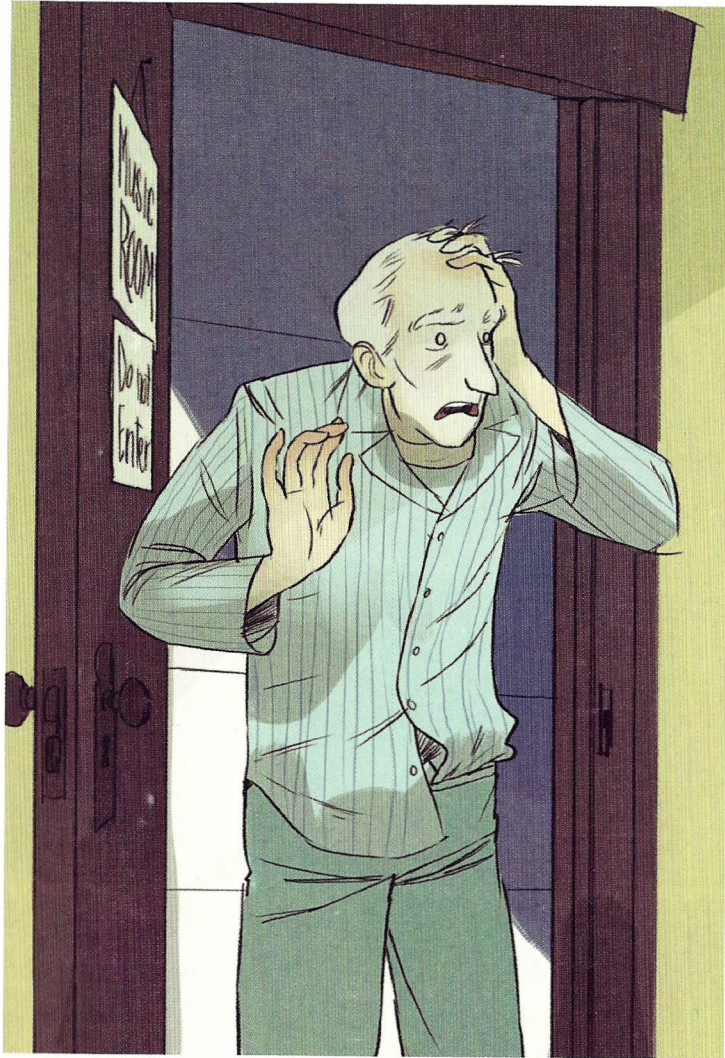
‘Now it’s 1850,’ Billy says. ‘When I’m old, I die in my house by the sea. The old woman is right. When the moon is full, my ghost can sail my ship for one night.’



‘But then in 1910 someone brings the picture here to Manor Hall,’ the pirate says. ‘This house isn’t near the sea, so I can’t sail my ship. When the moon is full, I sing songs about the sea, and the people in the house are afraid. They are afraid of the ghost. They put my picture in the music room and lock the door.’

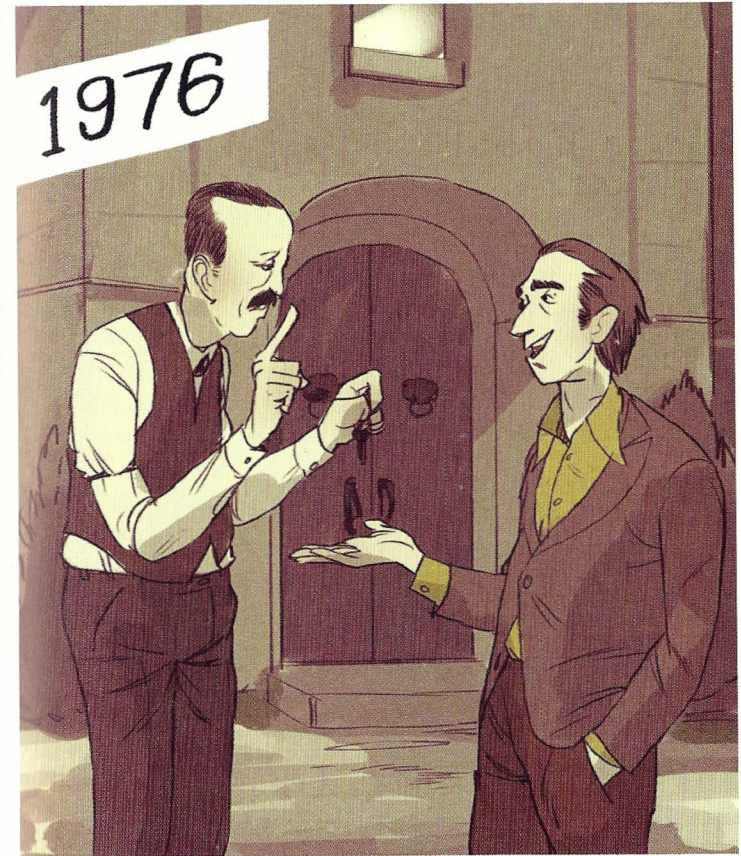
Suddenly the door of the music room opens.





Uncle Henry stands there. He looks at Billy Bones and then at Tom and Milly. His face is white.

‘Oh dear,’ he says. ‘Now you know about the mystery!’



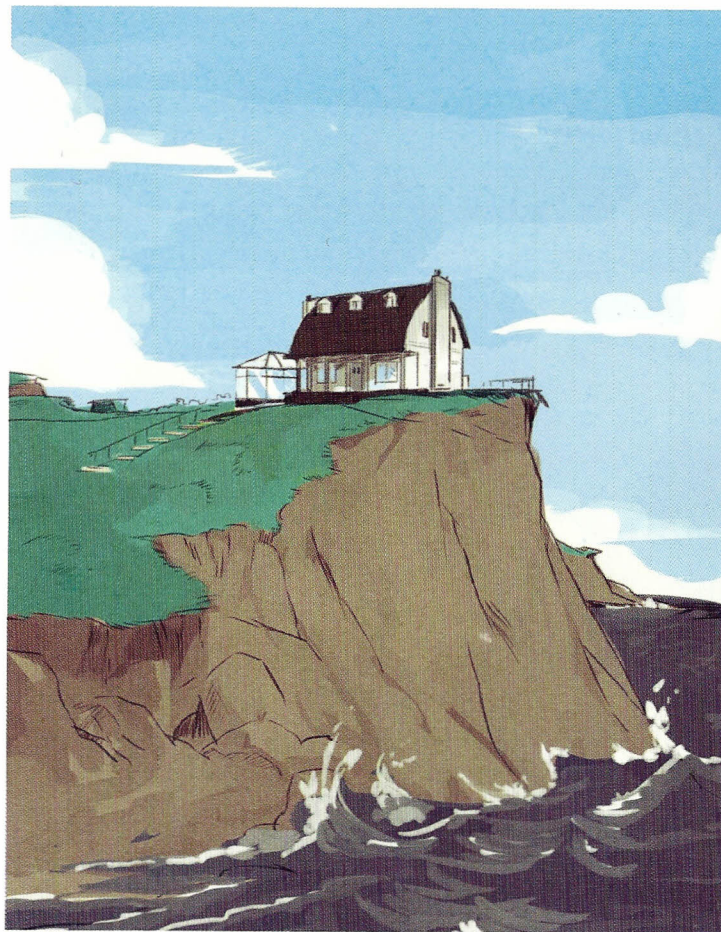
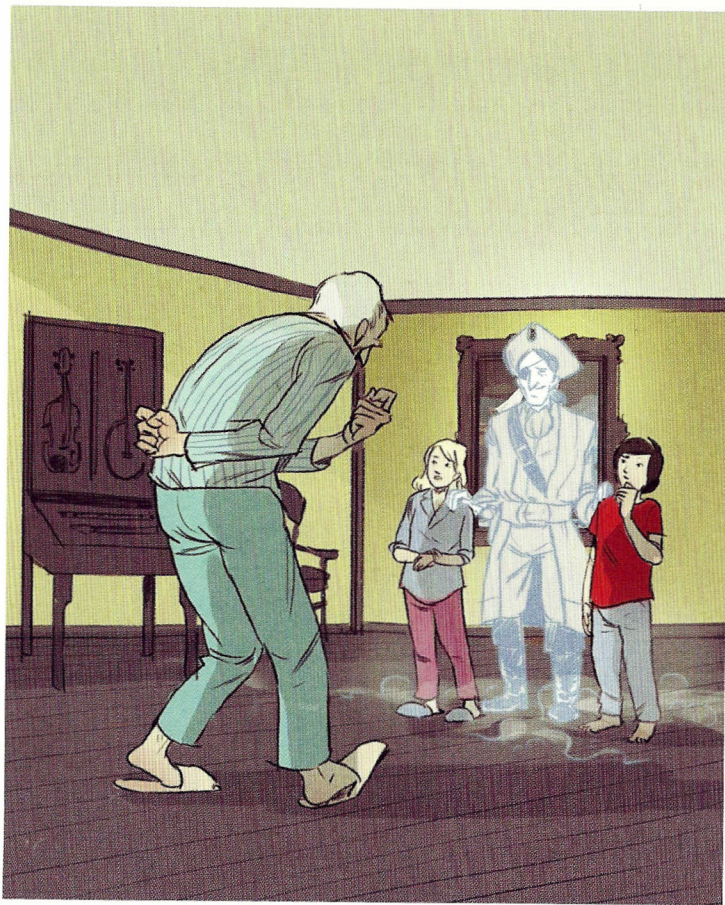
‘Now I must tell you my story,’ says Uncle Henry.

‘The year is 1976. I buy this house from an old man. He tells me about the picture and the ghost in the music room. I’m afraid of ghosts and I don’t go into the music room. I lock the door.’



‘Every month when there is a full moon, I hear a pirate singing songs about the sea,’ says Uncle Henry.

‘I know that he is unhappy and I know that he wants to go back to the sea. But I’m afraid and I can’t help him.’



‘I know!’ says Tom. ‘Our new house is in a beautiful place near the sea,’ he says. ‘From my bedroom I can hear the seagulls and the waves. Come with us. We can put your picture in the breakfast room where you can see the sea.’

Uncle Henry begins to smile.

‘How wonderful,’ says Billy Bones.

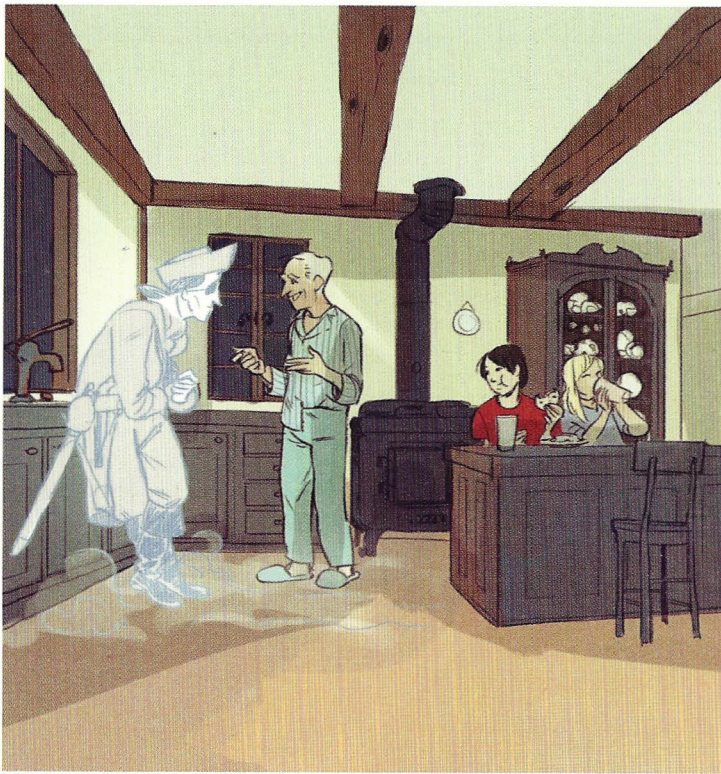


'I'm happy that you want to go with Tom and Milly,' says Uncle Henry. 'Please sit down, Billy Bones, and listen.'

Everyone sits at the kitchen table. 'You can go, but you must be quiet. You must sing quietly in their new house.'

'All right,' says Billy Bones. 'Are you afraid of ghosts now, Henry?'

Henry smiles. 'No, I'm not, Billy.'



'Mum's here,' says Milly. They run out of the house.

'Mum, we have something from Uncle Henry,' says Milly. 'It's for the new house.'

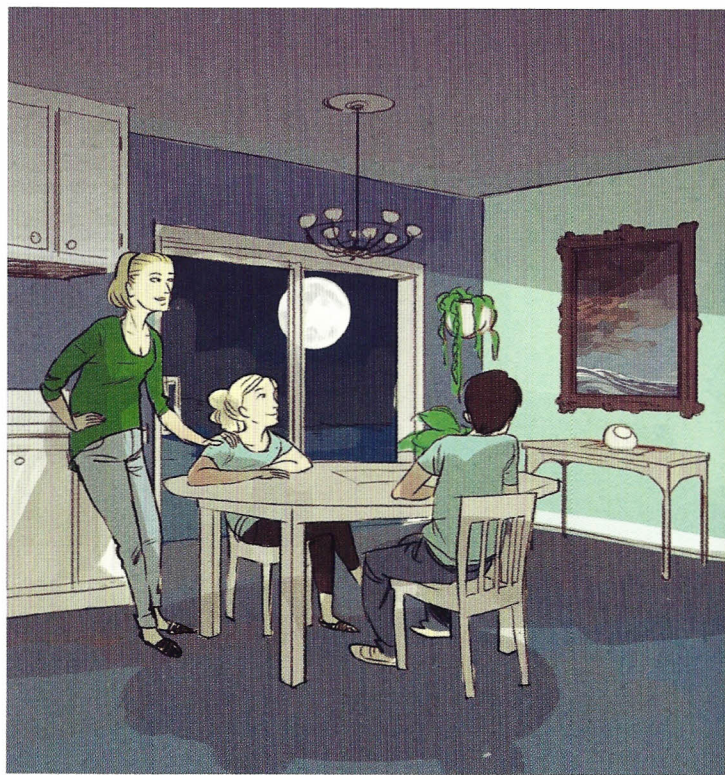
Mum looks at the picture. 'A ship and a handsome pirate . . . how lovely,' says Mum.



Tom and Milly say goodbye to Uncle Henry.

They take the picture to their new house by the sea. Pirate Billy Bones stands on his ship and he looks at his new home. He can hear seagulls and he quietly sings a song about the sea.

One day when there is a full moon . . . his ship disappears.



## GLOSSARY

**dinner** the main meal of the day (usually in the evening)

**disappear** to go away suddenly

**explore** to travel around a place to learn about it

**eyebrows** the hair above your eyes

**fight** (*v*) to attack someone

**full moon** the moon when it looks like a circle

**ghost** a dead person that moves around and people can see or hear it

**handsome** (*adj*) a man who is nice to look at

**lock** (*v*) to close something with a key (*adj*) **locked**

**magic** a special power that can make impossible things happen

**music room** a place where you play the piano, sing, etc.

**mystery** something we do not understand

**pirate** a person who fights ships on the sea to get treasure

**sail** (*v*) to travel on water in a boat or ship

**seagull** a bird that lives near the sea

**shake** to move your head from side to side to say 'no'

**ship** a large boat

**song** words that you sing

**treasure** a collection of gold, silver, jewellery, etc.

**unhappy** sad

**waves** lines of water that move across the sea



# The Mystery of Manor Hall

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## ACTIVITIES



ACTIVITIES

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*Before Reading*

1 Look at the front cover of the book and answer these questions.

1 Where do you think the story happens?

- a  in a modern house
- b  in an old house
- c  in an apartment

2 Where do you think Manor Hall is?

- a  America
- b  South Korea
- c  England

2 Read the back cover of the book and answer the questions.

- 1 Which room can nobody go in?
- 2 What do Tom and Milly hear?
- 3 What is moving in a picture?
- 4 Who is in the music room?



ACTIVITIES

*While Reading*

1 Read pages 1–5 then answer these questions.

- 1 Where does Uncle Henry live?
- 2 Who is going to stay with Uncle Henry?
- 3 What does their grandma say about Uncle Henry?
- 4 Where is their mum going?
- 5 Does Milly like the house? Why/Why not?
- 6 Are Tom and Milly early?

2 Read pages 6–10. Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?

- |                                                       |   |   |
|-------------------------------------------------------|---|---|
| 1 At dinner Uncle Henry talks a lot.                  | T | F |
| 2 Milly is reading a book in bed.                     | T | F |
| 3 Milly wakes up at midnight.                         | T | F |
| 4 There's a full moon.                                | T | F |
| 5 They can hear a woman singing a song about the sea. | T | F |

3 Read pages 11–14 and answer these questions.

- |         |                                        |
|---------|----------------------------------------|
| Who ... | 1 ... puts the light on?               |
|         | 2 ... is singing a song about the sea? |
|         | 3 ... shouts 'help'?                   |
|         | 4 ... is very white?                   |
|         | 5 ... listens to a story?              |

4 Read pages 15–18, then match the sentence halves to make four complete sentences.

- |                                         |                                            |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1 In 1793 Billy Bones and his men . . . | a someone takes the picture to Manor Hall. |
| 2 An old woman . . .                    | b paints a magic picture.                  |
| 3 In 1910 . . .                         | c are afraid of ghosts.                    |
| 4 The people at Manor Hall . . .        | d fight pirates.                           |

5 Read pages 19–21 and answer the questions.

- 1 Who comes into the music room?
- 2 When does Uncle Henry buy Manor Hall?
- 3 What is Uncle Henry afraid of?
- 4 Who says 'I can't help him.'
- 5 What can Tom hear from his bedroom?

6 Guess what happens next in the story. Yes No

- |                                                               |                          |                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Billy Bones doesn't want Tom and Milly to take the picture. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 Tom and Milly's mother doesn't want the picture.            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 Uncle Henry wants Billy Bones to stay.                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 Tom and Milly take the picture to their house by the sea.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



ACTIVITIES

*After Reading*

- 1 What do you know about Billy Bones and Uncle Henry? Choose the right words for each person, and then write a description.

*long black hair / a black hat*

*white hair / big eyebrows*

*handsome / pirate*

*full moon / sails ship*

*afraid / ghosts*

*buys Manor Hall / 1976*

- 2 The Story of Pirate Billy Bones. Put the sentences in the correct order. Number them 1–10.

- a  When the moon is full the ghost can sail for one night.
- b  Billy sings songs and the people at Manor Hall are afraid.
- c  They fight other pirates.
- d  Billy dies in 1850.
- e  In 1793 Billy and his men sail their ship *The Pearl*.
- f  In 1910 someone takes the picture to Manor Hall.
- g  An old woman paints a picture of *The Pearl*.
- h  The house isn't near the sea.
- i  The picture must be near the sea.
- j  The picture is magic.

- 3 Use these words to join the sentences together.

*but when because and for*

- 1 'You can explore. There is one room where you can't go.'
- 2 Tom is about to open the door. Uncle Henry sees them.
- 3 Tom opens the door. They run into the corridor.
- 4 We are very happy. We have lots of treasure.
- 5 When the moon is full my ghost can sail my ship. One night.

- 4 Complete this summary of the story. Use these words.

*when take moon because comes*

*room in unhappy tells near*

Tom and Milly are at Manor Hall, but there is a mystery. Uncle Henry says that they can explore, but there is one \_\_\_\_\_ where they can't go. One night, when the \_\_\_\_\_ is full, they hear someone singing in the music room. They go \_\_\_\_\_. There is a picture of a ship and a pirate and the ship is moving. The pirate \_\_\_\_\_ out of the picture. He \_\_\_\_\_ Tom and Milly his story. He is \_\_\_\_\_ because Manor Hall isn't \_\_\_\_\_ the sea. He can't sail his ship \_\_\_\_\_ the moon is full. Tom and Milly \_\_\_\_\_ the picture home with them. The pirate is happy \_\_\_\_\_ their house is near the sea.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jane Cammack was born in London, but now lives in Henley-on-Thames. She was an opera singer before becoming a writer and performed at *Sadler's Wells* and *Glyndebourne*. She lived in Italy for some years and sang at *La Scala* in Milan.

She has written several original stories for readers and enjoys writing fantasy. She has adapted and retold popular classics and has written many culture books and summer holiday books. In her free time she likes walking in the woods with her dog, reading, and travelling.

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