

❖ **Cassie Kingston Mysteries** ❖

The Painting of Swan Cove Island



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A little mystery is good for the soul.

Cassie Kingston Mysteries



The Message in the Transom
The Candlewick Inn Mystery
The Statue in Glen Park
The Painting of Swan Cove Island



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Chapter One

Sand and Surf

The evening skies were cloudy and dark, and the breeze was somewhat cool for late summer; however, the fires dotting the beach warmed the air and set the sand aglow to light the clambake festivities.

Best friends Cassie Kingston and Enilsa Santos were spending three weeks on Swan Cove Island. They had been on the island for just over a week and were having a blast so far. Because the girls had worked at an inn during the first part of the summer, this was their official summer vacation just to have fun. They hadn't minded making beds at the inn because it was fun and they had gotten paid for their work; however, it was very nice just to relax and enjoy a break. And since the girls didn't have to pay

anything for their island trip, because they were staying with Enilsa's grandmother, they could spend their money from working however they wished.

Swan Cove Island, five miles off the coast of the southernmost part of the state, was about a hundred and fifty miles from the girls' hometown of West Bend. About two hundred residents lived on Swan Cove Island year round. At any given time in the summer, another two hundred people could be found vacationing on the island. Blaineville, with a population of close to ninety thousand, was the closest mainland city to the island. A ferryboat in Blaineville took cars and people to and from Swan Cove Island twice daily.

Enilsa's grandmother was very happy to have company. Even though Enilsa's aunt, uncle, and two cousins lived in Blaineville, and visited most weekends, Grandma Josie was often lonely because Enilsa's grandfather had passed away the year before.

After spending their first couple of days touring the island with Grandma Josie, Enilsa and Cassie set out on their own each day to build

sand castles, swim in the ocean, collect sea shells, meet new friends, and just see the sights.

The weather was cooperating perfectly for the girls' daily adventures, with rain and mild windstorms generally holding off until late afternoons and evenings. On this particular evening, they wore sweatshirts and merely kept their windbreakers handy because they were plenty warm enough sitting beside the fire. No rain threatened their fun, and the food of the clambake was excellent.

Tim Stewart and Lisa Paul shared their fire. Cassie and Enilsa had met their new friends two days before when Lisa had invited them to join a beach volleyball game. Enilsa was a lot more athletic than Cassie and was very good at volleyball. Even though Cassie wasn't good at the game, she had a lot of fun because the other kids on her team didn't seem to mind that she couldn't play very well. This was a lot different than Cassie's volleyball experiences at home in P.E. classes, where most of the other kids were so competitive, they ended up yelling at her when she missed sets and blocks, or messed up serves. The atmosphere on Swan Cove Island was evidently very laid back, and many of the

people seemed more easygoing than those at home.

After the game, Cassie and Enilsa had hung out with Tim and Lisa. Lisa was the same age as her new friends, who were about to turn eleven. Tim was two years older, but he didn't seem to mind spending time with them, especially since he lived on the island year round and didn't have the chance to make as many friends as kids living in bigger cities. Lisa was just visiting the island, but had known Tim for many years because her family came back to vacation at the same resort hotel every summer.

About fifty people had been invited to the gigantic clambake, which was hosted by Tim's dad each year. The festivities included live music, to which a few people were dancing.

After stuffing themselves with mussels, clams, crabs, roasted corn, and fruit salad, the friends wandered around to visit other campfires. Enilsa's grandmother was keeping company with several women her age, and telling grandmother-age jokes, so the young people simply waved as they passed in search of a few folks closer in age to visit with.

“I know your cousins, Hector and Harold,” Tim told Enilsa. “They visit your grandmother a lot,” he added.

Enilsa nodded. “They’re coming to see us tomorrow,” she said.

After walking around for awhile, the friends settled back at their own fire to roast marshmallows on stretched-out wire coat hangers. When Tim left to get bottles of crème soda for them, Lisa told Enilsa and Cassie about a play being put on by the Swan Cove Players, a group that staged performances several times a year at the small theatre on the island. Lisa had a small part in the play that was currently rehearsing, and Tim was helping as part of the set-building crew.

While they were roasting marshmallows and sipping sodas, a couple of boys asked Lisa and Cassie to dance. Tim and Enilsa watched, and confided in each other that they really didn’t care for dancing.

A short while later, as they were cleaning up and getting ready to leave the party, the friends set a time to go swimming together the next day at Swan Cove.

After returning home, Enilsa and Cassie fell happily asleep, listening to the sound of the surf and thinking about their summer beach fun so far.

Chapter Two

Swan Cove and Duck Cove

Hector and Harold arrived on the morning ferry and were met by Enilsa, Cassie, and Grandma Josie. Hector was thirteen and had a little more in common with Cassie and Enilsa than Harold, who was eight. However, Harold liked to pretend he was more grown up than he actually was. And he liked to use very big words. The only problem with that was he often got the big words a little wrong. “*Salivations!*” cried Harold, giving Enilsa a big hug.

Fortunately, Hector usually knew what his brother was trying to say and could explain when needed. “He means *salutations*,” Hector told Cassie as he shook her hand in greeting. “It’s nice to finally meet you, Cassie,” he added.

“Enilsa has talked about you so much over the years, I feel like I know you already.”

Cassie smiled but didn't quite know what to say because Enilsa hardly ever mentioned her coastal cousins.

The boys got settled in quickly, and the group left Grandma Josie's house just before ten o'clock to meet Tim and Lisa on the beach. Since they had planned to walk to Swan Cove, which was just over a mile down the shore, Enilsa and Tim wore backpacks to carry water, food, and their gear. Enilsa also had her camera tucked safely into her pack. The others tightly rolled up their sunscreen, water bottles, sunglasses, and whatnots in their beach towels.

After reaching the rocky cove and having their first swim, the group sat together to have sandwiches and apples. Harold often had trouble sitting still and decided to have his sandwich while running around looking for shells and interesting bits of driftwood. The others kept an eye on him while they ate and talked.

“Did your grandmother tell you how Swan Cove was named?” Tim asked.

As Enilsa shook her head, Hector and Lisa smiled because they both knew the story. Cassie's ears perked up right away because she loved little bits of historical trivia.

“Well...” continued Tim, “Swan Cove Island has many coves; and this particular cove is shaped like a swan's silhouette, with a long neck and a big feathery wing.”

Looking around as Tim pointed to the features, Cassie and Enilsa could see that this was indeed true.

Tim smiled as he went on. “The people who first settled the island lived here for years before the dispute happened, and most of them didn't even understand the confusion until they had a big meeting to talk about it. There are actually two coves on this island that are shaped like swans. Half of the people were referring to this bay as Swan Cove, and the rest of the folks were calling the other one Swan Cove.”

At this point, Hector couldn't resist helping Tim tell the story. “When people would arrange to meet at Swan Cove, they sometimes ended up missing each other because they were each talking about a different place.”

“Then, finally,” added Lisa, “someone figured out that the two coves were being called by the same name; and that’s when they called the big meeting.”

“They argued about it for a long time,” Tim said, “and they eventually decided to call the bay with the longer neck Swan Cove. Then they renamed the one with the shorter neck Duck Cove. They actually measured to make sure they named the coves correctly. The neck of Swan Cove is four hundred and eighty-seven feet long, and the neck of Duck Cove is twenty-one feet shorter. They’re pretty close, that’s why they had to measure.”

“So, now do you want to see Duck Cove?” asked Hector.

Cassie and Enilsa both nodded enthusiastically.

“I thought so,” said Hector. “Most people want to see the other cove once they’ve heard the story.”

“I was going to ask my dad if I could take us out in our smaller boat to tour around the island,” said Tim. “I’ve been driving boats since I was eight, so he’ll probably say yes, as long as

we pick a weekday when there's less tourist boat traffic.”

“That sounds like fun,” said Lisa.

Tim was nodding. “Boating is really the best way to get around and see all the different coves.”

A little while later, after the friends took pictures and scoured the beach to look in tidal pools, Tim unpacked a bag of nacho cheese chips, which were somewhat crushed from having been in his backpack. A bag of cookies Enilsa had brought hadn't fared much better. However, the broken chips and cookie bits tasted just as good as unbroken ones, so the picnickers didn't mind.

After their snack, while Hector and Tim were keeping an eye on Harold, who was splashing about in the frothy surf, Lisa led Cassie and Enilsa up a steep cliff trail. As they climbed, and glanced upwards, they noticed an old woman strolling along one of the cliff tops. The woman stopped for a moment to stare down at them, but then turned quickly away.

“That's old Mrs. Pool,” said Lisa, somewhat out of breath from the climb. “She doesn't like kids much, so we always stay away from her.”

“I don’t remember Grandma ever mentioning her,” said Enilsa.

“I think Dinah Pool owned this whole island at one time,” said Lisa. “Now she lives up at the Cliff House. Her whole property is fenced off because she likes to keep people out.”

After reaching a certain spot on the cliff, Enilsa took a few pictures of the sea, and her friends, before the girls headed back down to the beach.

When they told Tim about seeing Mrs. Pool, he said, “My father talks to her sometimes, but I haven’t since I was a little kid.”

“We always stay away from her house,” said Harold, handing Enilsa a colorful shell he had just found. “She’s a *pectoral* old lady.”

After a short pause, Enilsa asked, “You mean *peculiar*?”

“Yes, that’s it,” said Harold, “*particular* and very *extrinsic*.” Smiling broadly, Harold next dashed off down the beach to look for more shells. When he was out of earshot, Enilsa said, “From what we know about Mrs. Pool, I doubt she’s *extrinsic*; but she probably is *eccentric*.”

The friends all laughed as Hector said, “You’re starting to speak *Harold Language* very well.”

Scanning the cliff tops a few minutes later, the beachgoers were able to spot Mrs. Pool again. A man had joined her in her stroll. “That’s Mr. Davidson with her,” said Tim. “He looks after Mrs. Pool’s yard and repairs things. He lives in a little house on the property, behind hers.”

About a half-hour later, when Harold had finally returned from his latest expedition, the group packed up their gear and left the cove.

Chapter Three

The Painting

Early the next morning, Cassie and Enilsa made sure to phone home because it had been a couple of days since they had checked in with their parents.

After breakfast, the girls took a long walk down the beach while Hector and Harold went with Grandma Josie to the grocery store. Several fishermen were getting ready to go out on their jobs for the day, and they made friendly conversation with the girls. One white-haired gentleman named Mr. Zefal enjoyed their company so much, he showed Cassie and Enilsa how his fishing baskets and lobster traps worked. He then gave them a short tour of his

boat. After disembarking, the girls waved goodbye to Mr. Zefal as he set out for the day.

Cassie and Enilsa returned home after their walk to help unload groceries and prepare for lunch. After lunch, Grandma Josie put everyone to work at the kitchen table, polishing up her silver service that was going to be put up for sale in an upcoming auction, while she cleaned the bathroom and took a nap.

“Grandma really needs some extra money,” Harold said in a low voice. “She is practically *improvised*.”

“I don’t think it’s as bad as that,” said Hector. “She’s not *impoverished*. Money has just been really tight since Grandpa died.”

“But it is a shame that she has to sell her silver,” Enilsa said, also keeping her voice low. “This was her Twentieth Anniversary present from Grandpa.”

With the four of them working hard, the silver service was polished and packed carefully away in the velvet-lined wooden boxes designed for it in less than two hours.

Grandma Josie had just risen from her nap. She was about to suggest that they all head out to the beach to take a swim when a sudden storm

hit. With rain drumming on the roof, they discussed watching television or playing board games to pass the time, but nothing really sounded interesting.

“Well,” said Grandma Josie, “if you want, you can help me by cleaning out the den. I’ve had a heck of a time trying to get organized since Grandpa passed, and that’s one room I haven’t tackled yet.”

“We’d love to help,” said Enilsa, with everyone but Harold nodding. (He really wanted to go swimming, and he was tired of helping.)

“Good,” said Grandma Josie. She led them to the large back room to show them what to do as far as sorting, moving, and cleaning. After making sure they knew which items were to be kept in the den, which ones should be moved to the attic, and which were to be put in donation boxes, she added, “I’m going to get a stew started for dinner while you’re working.” With this, she turned and headed towards the kitchen.

The chore wasn’t much of a chore at all because they had fun sorting through boxes of old books and winter clothing. The drawers of an antique bureau held an assortment of

Grandpa's military ribbons and pins, along with old letters, photographs, postcards, and bills.

"Is that Grandpa's *condemnation* medal?" asked Harold.

"He got a *commendation*," said Hector, giving Cassie and Enilsa a sideways look.

A few miscellaneous items such as a flashlight, a vase full of peacock feathers, and a set of screwdrivers were set aside until they could ask Grandma Josie what she wanted to do with them.

In the very back corner of the room, tucked behind the raised fireplace hearth, they found an unusual painting of the coastline of Swan Cove Island. The painting was done in the style of an elevation drawing, which showed the cliffs, rocks, and sandy shores as if looking at them head on from the sea. But that was not what made the artwork unusual. What was unique about this particular elevation painting was that the coastline of the island was broken into six rows. In order to view the entire shoreline, the painting was meant to be read like lines in a book, from left to right, starting at the top and working downward. The picture was very detailed, so it was understandable as to why the

artist needed six rows to capture all of the tiny coves, twisted trees, clumps of boulders, and various cliff ledges making up the coastline. Directly beneath the bottom row, in fancy lettering, the painting bore the title, *Swan Cove Island*.

“This is really beautiful,” remarked Cassie. Everyone agreed, and they found it hard to draw their eyes away from the painting.

Enilsa had laid the picture flat on a hassock and was carefully dusting the frame when Grandma Josie entered the room to check on their progress. “Your grandpa painted that,” she said. “I took it down a couple of years back when we were cleaning up after a spring storm.”

As they continued to admire the picture, Enilsa said, “I didn’t know Grandpa liked to paint.”

“He took it up rather late in life,” said Grandma Josie, “when he got a bunch of old canvases and brushes and stuff from a garage sale. That was about ten years ago. He really took to it; and he studied up on it, with books from the library, and magazines. He even went to an art show in Blaineville.”

In looking very closely at the painting, Enilsa could just make out Grandpa's signature in the bottom left-hand corner. It was so tiny, they hadn't noticed it before.

"I wanted to take up a new hobby too," Grandma Josie went on. "I always wanted to learn to play the piano. But no one offers lessons on the island, and I don't really want to have to take the ferry for something like that."

"You could take lessons on a computer," Enilsa suggested.

"Really?" remarked Grandma Josie.

Hector was nodding. "You would need to get both a computer and a music keyboard," he said.

"Yes," added Enilsa. "Then you just plug the keyboard into the computer; and the software includes lessons, music, and a metronome that you can turn on and off."

"Well, that's very interesting," said Grandma Josie. "I'll have to think about that. Meanwhile," she added, "I'd really like to hang that painting back up."

"We can do that for you," said Hector.

"Over the side table," Grandma Josie said, pointing to the spot on the wall.

Anxious to get on with the hanging, Hector headed to the kitchen right away to get a hammer and nail. Harold followed his brother because he was anxious for a snack.

When the boys left, Grandma Josie picked up the set of screwdrivers and the flashlight to take with her to store in the laundry utility closet. As Hector reentered the room with the hammer and nail, she said, “Good job on the den crew!”

“It was fun,” said Cassie, with Enilsa nodding.

As she was leaving the room, Grandma Josie added, “Oh, and you girls can have those peacock feathers, if you want them.”

Harold, munching a peanut butter and grape jelly sandwich, came back into the den about a minute after Grandma Josie left.

As Cassie and Enilsa were helping Hector decide the exact placement of the nail, Harold leaned over the hassock to admire the painting. In doing so, he accidentally dripped a glob of grape jelly onto the canvas. “Ooops,” he said.

When Enilsa turned to look, she exclaimed, “Oh no!”

As quickly as possible, Cassie and Enilsa rushed to the bathroom in the hall for a wet

washrag and a dry towel. When they returned, they quickly set to work to remove Harold's mess. They were mostly successful, and the grape jelly left only a small stain at the top of the painting amongst the clouds and blue sky.

"We better tell Grandma," said Enilsa, fretfully.

"I'll tell her," said Hector. "I've figured out how to do this over the years," he added, giving his little brother a look.

Grandma Josie was in the kitchen. Sure enough, when Hector, in an extremely apologetic tone, told her, "We got a little grape jelly on Grandpa's painting, but we cleaned it off, and it doesn't look too bad," Grandma Josie, smiling, simply replied, "That's okay; accidents happen."

"The trick is not to cover anything up," Hector whispered after they left the kitchen. "Just be completely honest, and polite," he added.

Late in the afternoon, when the others were watching television, Enilsa couldn't resist going back into the den to look at the painting again. From the numerous hours she had spent touring the island, she was able to recognize many

specific boulders and cliff trees. She sat on the hassock in front of the painting for nearly an hour. Studying every inch of the picture, Enilsa was fascinated with the amount of detail her grandfather had managed to include.

As she was leaving the den to join the others for dinner, Enilsa had to admit she was starting to love Swan Cove Island as much as her grandfather had.

Chapter Four

Beachcombing

Cassie and Enilsa got up very early the next morning, because they had promised to help Lisa and Tim with some of the preparations for the play at the Island Theatre.

Before leaving, the girls said goodbye to Harold. Grandma Josie was helping him pack up to leave because he was going to camp for a week. They only had time for a quick goodbye because Grandma Josie was rushing Harold. With only two crossings to the mainland each day, they had to catch the morning ferry; and Harold was being rather pokey. He was also rather cross because he really wanted to sleep in, which is what Hector was doing.

After each grabbing an apple to eat on the way, Cassie and Enilsa set off on the half-mile walk inland to the downtown theatre.

Tim and Lisa were already there, and they quickly put their new friends to work. Cassie helped Tim, who was building a doorway, while Enilsa helped Lisa paint a table and chairs. Several of Lisa's fellow actors were helping with various other projects. Since the Swan Cove Players were a small troupe, the performers often helped with the set work.

After nearly two hours of work, they took a short break. Wandering around backstage, Enilsa discovered a thunder machine stored behind several pieces of furniture. The machine was simply a large sheet of thick aluminum hung in a wooden frame, but it really did sound like thunder when it was shaken.

They finished up about an hour later and briefly met the show's director who arrived just as they were leaving. Jon White, who looked to be in his mid-thirties, had lived on Swan Cove Island all his life. In addition to being a director, he was also a poet and playwright. He chatted to them enthusiastically about a play he was currently writing called *August Snow*, set on

a farm in the 1940's. *August Snow* sounded like a serious drama; whereas, the play currently being staged was an award-winning comedy called *You Can't Take It with You*.

As they left the theatre, Lisa told her friends, "I hope they put on *August Snow* in the summer, so I can try out for it."

After saying goodbye to their friends at an intersection two blocks from the theatre, Cassie and Enilsa walked back to Grandma Josie's house, arriving just before noon. Hector was watching television when the girls arrived. Grandma Josie wasn't due back until evening because she was staying on the mainland to do some shopping after delivering Harold to his parents.

They discussed a variety of afternoon plans while having lunch, and eventually decided to go beachcombing. In their short stay on the island, the girls had already amassed a good collection of shells and sea glass, along with interesting bits of driftwood and polished pebbles; but they were always excited about hunting for more. Hector liked to collect shells and sea glass too, and didn't mind going with them.

While they were strolling along a somewhat lonely stretch of shore, they came upon an elderly man with white hair and a long beard who was also collecting shells and pebbles. As they neared the man's position, in a low voice, Hector told Cassie and Enilsa, "That's Abram. They say he's been beachcombing here for about eighty years."

Abram was wearing somewhat ragged clothing with large pockets that were currently bulging with the fruits of his beachcombing labors.

"Hello," said Enilsa, as they approached.

Abram responded with a nod and "Find anything neat today?"

Smiling, Enilsa fished in her pocket and showed Abram a piece of pale green sea glass.

"Oh, that is nice," remarked Abram.

Cassie showed the man three shells she had found. "Those are nice too," he said.

As Hector introduced Cassie and Enilsa by name, Abram said, "Pleased to meet you." Looking around, he asked Hector, "Where's your little scamp of a brother?"

Laughing, Hector responded, "At summer camp."

“Nice to have a break from him once in awhile, I imagine,” Abram said.

Even though he didn’t say anything, Hector couldn’t help but agree.

Next, out of the blue, Abram asked, “So...have you found the buried treasure yet?”

After a long pause of silence, as Cassie muttered “Here we go again,” under her breath, Enilsa loudly exclaimed, “There’s no way! It’s impossible to find three treasures in one summer!” Enilsa began to say something else, but found it difficult because she was starting to laugh.

Cassie had to agree with her friend. “Did someone put you up to this?” she asked Abram. Though she was sometimes slow to get jokes, and often took her time when thinking things through, even Cassie wasn’t that gullible. She thought someone had probably told Abram that she and Enilsa had found a valuable antique doll and several large sapphires earlier in the summer.

Hector didn’t say anything, but he did look sharply, and somewhat harshly, at his cousin and Cassie, who looked back at him in slight confusion.

Abram's feelings were clearly hurt by their skepticism.

After nearly a full minute of awkward silence, during which Cassie and Enilsa very much regretted their impulsive comments, Abram said, "Pirates used to sail these waters. They visited this island many times in their travels, and they left a great treasure here. People have been looking for it for over one hundred years." He seemed so earnest and sincere, the girls felt even worse than before.

"We didn't know about the pirates," Enilsa said quietly, "and we thought you might be playing a joke on us."

Cassie hurried to try to explain. "We found some really valuable things earlier in the summer. So a buried treasure on top of that just sounded a little too good to be true."

Abram smiled as he said, "I guess I can understand that. I just thought you might be interested in helping with the search. I'm afraid I'm fresh out of ideas as to where to look. Those pirates were really crafty in hiding their stolen goods."

By end of their visit with Abram, Cassie started to think there might be something to the

buried pirate treasure story, mainly because it was obvious that Abram definitely believed in it.

Enilsa was still very skeptical. On their way home, she said, “Lightning can’t strike three times in the same place.”

However, it was going to, in this case, as Cassie and Enilsa were about to find out.

Chapter Five

Mr. Dan and Mrs. Pool

Early the next morning, Cassie and Enilsa decided to visit Tim to ask him about the old man's story. As they sat on the dock behind Tim's house, he smiled and told them, "Abram is probably our most colorful island character. He's not just our local pirate storyteller; he's nearly as strange and mysterious as Mrs. Pool because no one knows anything about his history, or his family. And because of all the pirate stories, some people speculate that his parents, or grandparents, *were* the pirates."

When the girls didn't say anything, Tim added, "I haven't believed any of the pirate treasure stories since I was about five, but you might check at the library because people have

written articles and books over the years about the pirates who used to sail the waters around Swan Cove Island.”

Cassie and Enilsa thought this was a very good idea. Cassie, especially, wasn’t ready to give up on the idea of finding pirate treasure.

“Ask for Mr. Dan at the library,” Tim said. “Actually, he’ll probably be the only person there in the summer—our library is pretty small. But he’s usually pretty helpful.”

Since Hector was spending the day with some of his friends on the island, and the girls didn’t have anything else planned, they walked downtown just after nine o’clock. The library was open, but was completely deserted when they arrived. A small note taped to the check-out desk read, *Be back at nine-thirty.*

While they were waiting, the girls used the library computer to check their email. According to Roberta, a friend from home, other than shopping for back-to-school stuff, nothing much exciting was going on in West Bend. Cassie and Enilsa both sent quick replies to Roberta to let her know they were having fun and that they would see her in about two weeks.

Next, the girls flipped through a couple of fashion magazines for a few minutes until a young man entered the library.

“Hello, I’m Dan Marshall,” he said. “But you can call me Mr. Dan, most folks do. I run the library.”

“Our friend Tim told us to talk to you,” said Cassie, introducing herself and Enilsa.

“Tim Stewart, I’m guessing, out at Gull’s Point. He’s about your age.”

“Yes, that’s him,” said Enilsa.

Cassie then explained the reason for their visit.

“There are a lot of hidden caves in this area,” Mr. Dan told them. “Some are really hard to find because the rocks overlap and camouflage the entrances. That’s probably why the pirate treasure rumors have persisted for so many years. I don’t particularly believe them myself,” he continued. “I mean, if the pirates hid their treasure somewhere, they surely would have come back for it.” Mr. Dan’s eyes held a mischievous glint, as he paused before adding, “But, then, a lot of the pirates got killed in their jobs, didn’t they; so they couldn’t have come back, could they?”

As Cassie and Enilsa pondered if the librarian was a really a skeptic, or not, Mr. Dan told them, “Some people believe that the treasure never found its way into the hands of pirates because the explorers who brought it here hid it so that pirates couldn’t steal it. Then, when the explorers died from things like disease, or pirate attacks, there was no record of where the treasure was hidden.”

The speculation was very interesting; however, since Cassie and Enilsa wanted more information, Mr. Dan referred them to a shelf of books about the pirate history of Swan Cove Island. As they were perusing the books, the librarian pulled up a couple of news articles on microfiche for them to look at. The books and articles mainly chronicled search attempts that had been undertaken over the years. Other than vague references to coins and jewelry, no specific information was given as to the nature of the treasure, so the girls were somewhat frustrated not even to discover exactly what people were searching for.

After looking over all of the library materials, Cassie and Enilsa were not at all hopeful that they would be able to find anything that other

people had missed over the years, especially since their stay on the island was going to be so brief. And they decided that the treasure hunting was probably best left to the year-round island residents. Indeed, without actual clues, and with the booty probably very well hidden, the girls thought the treasure might never be found, unless someone happened to luck into it. And even if someone stumbled upon a clue, they might not recognize that it was important unless they were specifically into treasure hunting.

Even though the Swan Cove Island Library was small, it stayed fairly busy because a lot of people used the library services to obtain books from the mainland. So that people wouldn't have to spend time ferrying, Mr. Dan often sent for books and other materials from the libraries in Blaineville. "It just takes a day," he said, as he offered to get a few more relevant books for them.

"No, that's okay," said Enilsa. "This was enough to look through."

Cassie agreed.

They were just about to leave when Mr. Dan told Enilsa, "Your grandfather liked to use our exchange program. After he checked out every

art book here, he had me request two or three more from Blaineville nearly every week.”

The girls were heading for the door when Cassie suddenly remembered something Lisa had said—that Mrs. Pool used to own Swan Cove Island. Perhaps she was somehow connected to the treasure. On impulse, Cassie asked Mr. Dan about this. “If Mrs. Pool used to own this island, maybe she or one of her ancestors found the treasure long ago,” Cassie suggested.

The librarian smiled and shook his head as he answered. “Her money didn’t come from a lost treasure. But I think her history is even more interesting than the pirate tales.”

Cassie and Enilsa listened raptly as he went on. “Dinah Pool was a fashion model and a Radio City Music Hall Rockette. Then, she married a millionaire who bought her this island. Her husband died pretty young. I think Mrs. Pool had two sons; but they went off to boarding school, so they didn’t grow up here and not many locals got to know them. And I think one of them is disabled.

“But she didn’t have her fortune for very long,” Mr. Dan added. “A lot of her late

husband's investments went sour, so she had to sell off parts of the island. Now, she mainly keeps to herself. A lot of people speculate about her. I think she's just one of those people who like isolation."

After thanking Mr. Dan for his help, the girls left the library and headed for home, where they helped Grandma Josie dust and vacuum before lunch.

In the afternoon, while Cassie was reading, Enilsa found herself sitting on the hassock in front of her grandfather's painting. She was completely fascinated by it, and studying the details engrossed her for well over an hour. In fact, for some reason, staring at the painting seemed every bit as interesting to Enilsa as looking for pirate treasure.

Chapter Six

Around the Island

Cassie, Enilsa, and Hector met Tim and Lisa early the next morning for a planned trip around Swan Cove Island in Tim's father's motorboat. They all donned life vests as Tim went through a safety checklist and did a radio check.

Tim had been boating for years and was very conscientious of the rules for both safety and courtesy. He was always very careful to observe all of the no wake zones in the coves, and he made sure to only pass other boats on the correct side. Tim had already checked the weather report for the day to make sure clear skies and calm seas were expected.

Since Swan Cove Island was rather large, the group planned to spend the entire day going

around the whole island and taking in the sights. Lisa and Enilsa had packed a big picnic lunch for them. The morning was beautiful and breezy as they set off and enjoyed the ride on frothy glittering waters. Enilsa had a little trouble keeping her camera dry from the sea spray as she snapped pictures of birds, waves, and the rocky shoreline.

Just before noon, Tim pulled up to the public dock in Duck Cove, so they could go ashore and have their picnic lunch. Duck Cove did very much resemble Swan Cove, and it was understandable as to how early settlers to the island could have gotten easily confused. Due to steep cliffs and large boulders, Duck Cove was somewhat difficult to reach from inland, and was really only safely accessible by a long series of wooden ladders extending from the cliff top to a small deck landing at the base of the cliff. No other visitors were currently present, so the picnickers had the cove all to themselves.

While they were eating, Enilsa studied the cliffs of the cove. Remembering many of the details from her grandfather's painting, she immediately noticed something odd about the scenery. After several minutes of puzzling, she

fished a pad of paper and pencil from her backpack and walked down the shoreline to a spot about forty yards from their picnic spot.

A few moments later, out of curiosity, Cassie rose to follow her friend. “What is it?” she asked Enilsa, who had already begun sketching something on the pad of paper.

“I don’t know exactly,” Enilsa replied, “but something is definitely off here. I want to compare this to Grandpa’s painting when we get back.”

When Enilsa had completed a rough sketch of a certain spot along the cliff embankment, the girls returned to their friends to help pack up the picnic leftovers. The group departed a few minutes later to continue their boat tour.

Her thoughts on Duck Cove, and her grandfather’s painting, Enilsa was quiet for the rest of the afternoon as they finished circling the island.

At one point in their travels, they passed very close to Mrs. Pool’s large boat dock. Mr. Davidson was onshore very close to the dock, and he gestured to them, as if waving them away.

Shaking his head, Tim increased the distance between the boat and the dock, as he exclaimed, “Gee whiz! He’s being very territorial. I wasn’t planning to pull up!”

When they made it home to Grandma Josie’s, the first thing Enilsa did was head to the den to look at the painting. Pulling the sketch from her backpack, her eyes scanned the line of the painting that featured Duck Cove. She had been right! The painting did not match the actual cove.

Cassie, Hector, and Grandma Josie soon joined Enilsa in the den, where she excitedly told them, “This is something of a mystery. Grandpa’s painting is different. He added a cliff to Duck Cove that’s not really there.”

“He lived here forever,” said Hector. “How could he have gotten it wrong?”

Grandma Josie was also very puzzled.

As they looked closely at the painting, they noticed a small mark that looked like an arrow on one edge of the added cliff. The arrow pointed to a large rock cluster that Enilsa remembered from their visit. “That group of rocks really is there,” she said. “Maybe there’s something hidden there.”

Grandma Josie smiled at her granddaughter's enthusiasm. "As long as you go during low tide," she said, "you should be able to squeeze in there and explore."

Cassie, Enilsa, and Hector were very excited about the prospect of making another trip to Duck Cove. Unfortunately, they were not going to be able to go the next day because Tim and Lisa's play was making its debut.

The Swan Cove Players were starting with a Wednesday matinee in order to give a special performance. A large group of children who received medical treatment at a hospital in Blaineville were staying on the island for the week. And coming to the play in the daytime suited their schedule of activities much better than an evening performance would have.

Cassie, Enilsa, and Hector had all volunteered to hand out programs and act as ushers for this performance. They left the house right after lunch to walk downtown to the theatre. They didn't see their friends when they arrived because Lisa was getting ready to perform and Tim was busy working as part of the props crew.

The play was wonderfully funny, and Lisa gave an outstanding performance. After the play, they all attended a party, which included the children from the audience. The director and stage manager both seemed very pleased with the results of the day, and the gathering was very merry.

Chapter Seven

Return to Duck Cove

Cassie, Enilsa, and Hector got up early the next morning in order to make another trip to Duck Cove. Tim and Lisa couldn't go with them because they were doing family things.

They rode bicycles halfway around the island and climbed down the long series of ladders to reach the isolated cove. The ladder climb was a little unsettling to Cassie, and she remarked, "It's no wonder not many people come here."

Anxious to investigate the particular cluster of rocks indicated by the arrow on the painting, Enilsa immediately loped down the beach to the correct spot. Hector and Cassie followed, and the three were soon squeezing in and around boulders to search the area.

They weren't disappointed. After only a couple of minutes of searching, they discovered the entrance to a small cave. The rocks around the entrance overlapped, camouflaging the opening.

"I doubt very many people ever find this," remarked Hector, "unless they are looking for it."

Cassie nodded as she followed Enilsa and Hector inside.

When their eyes adjusted to the darkness, they hunted around. No one mentioned the possibility of buried pirate treasure, but they were all thinking about it. Indeed, Cassie's palms were tingling and she felt slightly out of breath as they searched.

The cave only had one chamber, as far as they could tell, and no passages leading off to anywhere else. Though sandy, the floor of the cave felt like solid rock. "I don't think anything is buried here," said Cassie, stomping lightly on the rock beneath her feet.

At the rear of the cave, Enilsa squeezed into a large crack, but discovered nothing remarkable, other than a rock wall at the back. Prying

herself loose from the crack, she said, “So much for finding a buried pirate treasure.”

Hector laughed as he stood on his tiptoes to run his hand along a rock ledge. “Maybe they took it with them somehow,” he said.

“But ‘*You Can’t Take It with You*,’” said Cassie, referring to the play they had just seen. Enilsa and Hector laughed at Cassie’s joke.

After leaving the cave, they took a stroll along the beach. Enilsa found a lovely piece of green sea glass, and Hector found two unique shells, which he gave to Cassie and Enilsa. As they walked back to the rock cluster in front of the cave, they ate a snack of granola bars.

“Let’s have another look in the cave before we go,” suggested Enilsa. The others agreed.

Once inside, they noticed three good-sized seashells neatly arranged on a low rock ledge very near the entrance.

“Those weren’t here before,” said Cassie. Scooping up the shells, she dashed outside.

Hector and Enilsa quickly followed. Their eyes scanning the beach, and they spied Abram a short ways down shore. As Hector called out, Abram paused to allow them to catch up to him.

When they reached the man, Enilsa breathlessly asked, “Did you put these shells in the cave?”

Smiling, Abram admitted that he had. “I wanted you to be able to find a treasure, but this is all the treasure I have to give.”

“Shells are pretty special to collect,” said Cassie. “I think they can definitely be considered a treasure.”

“They’re really beautiful,” said Enilsa. “Thank you.”

“Yes, thank you,” added Cassie.

“They look really rare,” said Hector. “Are you sure you want to part with them?”

Abram looked pleased. “Yes, I’m sure,” he said.

After bidding the beachcomber farewell, they climbed the ladder to make the long bike trek back to Grandma Josie’s house.

In the afternoon, while Hector was out with some of his friends, Cassie and Enilsa met up with Tim and Lisa for a swim. After telling their friends about the return trip to Duck Cove, the group only had time for a short swim because Tim and Lisa had to leave early to get ready for their evening play performance.

At home in the evening, Enilsa again went to the den to pour over her grandfather's painting. And her eyes kept getting drawn back to part of the painting containing the cliff that didn't exist. The exact details were difficult to make out in the dim light of the den. On impulse, Enilsa carefully took down the painting and carried it outside to the front porch, where she placed it on the table in front of the porch swing. Since the summer days were long, there was still enough good light outside to be able to see the details of the picture very well. Looking closely at the painting, Enilsa was startled to discover that the sketching of the nonexistent cliff looked a lot like spidery old handwriting, and not just a drawing of a cliff. "This looks like Grandpa's handwriting," she said aloud. "But it's very tiny," she mused, as she ran inside to borrow her grandmother's reading glasses.

Cassie and Grandma Josie joined Enilsa on the porch to see what Enilsa was getting so excited about. Sure enough, the tiny scratch marks making up the cliff were handwriting. However, the letters looked backwards, so they weren't able to read the words.

"We could use a mirror," Cassie suggested.

“Good idea!” exclaimed Grandma Josie, immediately springing into action to retrieve a hand mirror from her bathroom.

When Grandma Josie returned, Cassie placed the mirror on its edge on the painting, but at an angle so that the spidery letters could be seen in reflection.

Still wearing her grandmother’s magnifying glasses, Enilsa knelt down beside the table to be able to read the words.

“*Bottom Desk Drawer,*” she breathed. “That’s what it says.”

Taking the painting with them, the three hurried inside again to the den to Grandpa’s old desk. In the bottom drawer, very far in the back, they discovered a book called *East Coast Artists*. Inside the book, they found a folded sheet of notebook paper. Enilsa’s eyes grew very round as she unfolded the paper and scanned the first few lines.

The top of the paper bore the title, *The Grandpa Game*, in Grandpa’s spidery handwriting. Underneath, in parentheses, he had written, (*something to amuse me in my old age*).

With Cassie and Grandma Josie looking over her shoulder, Enilsa read the rest of the contents of the paper aloud:

*Scour the island to find the treasure.
Follow my game closely, and you will find something very valuable. First, you must find two clues.*

To begin, look for the tallest thing on Main Street.

The shadow at sunrise points to what? Go there.

When you get there, find the triangle with the broken corner. The broken corner points to something that points to what you need to find. Walk straight in that direction until you can't walk anymore.

What lies in front of you is the first clue.

Next, climb fifty stairs.

Then look for the green castle and go there.

When you get there, look for an arch beside a water feature.

Look through the arch at the odd glass.

The shape of the glass is the second clue.

Put the two clues together to find an important spot.

When you get there, watch out for snakes.

Then, look up to find what's hidden.

However...

the real treasure lies underneath.

Chapter Eight

The Grandpa Game

Grandma Josie was very amused by the game her late husband had designed; however, she quickly decided that the adventure was better left to young people. “I’m sure you’ll share the treasure with me when you find it,” she joked.

Hector was just arriving home as Cassie and Enilsa were making plans to begin the treasure hunt the next day. Enilsa ended up phoning Tim and Lisa rather late to ask them to join the game.

In the morning, they used an alarm clock to get up well before dawn in order to go along with the sunrise part of Grandpa’s instructions.

Extremely excited to be part of a treasure hunt, the friends were almost giddy. On the way

downtown, Hector said, “I think the tallest thing on Main Street is the flagpole.”

“Unless the tallest thing is a tree,” countered Enilsa.

“We’ll have to wait and see,” said Lisa, as they hurried along streets lit dimly by scattered lampposts.

As they walked, Hector quickly filled in Tim and Lisa as to how Cassie and Enilsa had already found two treasures so far this summer.

“I can’t believe you didn’t tell us you were amateur detectives,” said Tim.

Lisa was also surprised.

“We didn’t want to make a big deal out of it,” said Enilsa.

“We were just lucky,” added Cassie.

Enilsa had written out two copies of *The Grandpa Game* so that they could more easily share the instructions. She also wanted to leave the original at home so it wouldn’t get messed up. Enilsa gave one copy to Tim and Lisa to use, and she shared the other one with Hector and Cassie.

The flagpole in front of the post office was definitely the tallest thing on Main Street, at about ten feet taller than any of the buildings on

the block. Several trees were gaining on the flagpole, but none had yet reached that height.

The onlookers watched breathlessly as the sun rose to create the flagpole shadow, which clearly pointed to a spot between two buildings that marked the entrance to the City Park. Quickly trotting over to the park, they looked for a triangle with a broken corner.

Hector was the first to notice a triangular picnic table that had one corner broken from it. The broken corner pointed directly to a statue near the center of the park. The statue itself was a bronze sculpture of a man raising his arm to point in the general direction of Blaineville. However, within their immediate area, the statue pointed toward the far end of the park.

Following Grandpa's next instructions, they walked straight in the direction the statue pointed until they couldn't walk anymore because they ran into the fence surrounding the City Pool.

"So this is the first clue," said Enilsa, "the pool."

The City Pool didn't open until eleven, and other than a maintenance man near the main pavilion, the park was deserted.

“I’m wondering if we got this right,” Enilsa remarked, in slight confusion.

“What do you mean?” asked Cassie. “We followed the instructions exactly.”

“But it was too easy,” said Enilsa.

“She’s right,” agreed Hector. “Our Grandpa was cleverer than that.”

“Maybe the second clue will be harder to find,” suggested Lisa.

They moved on to the second part of *The Grandpa Game* fairly easily when Tim, consulting the sheet of instructions, said, “The only place on the island with fifty stairs is Majestic Point. It’s a popular tourist photo spot.”

Hector was also familiar with the overlook, which was about a half-mile from the City Park.

They walked briskly and reached Majestic Point in less than twenty minutes. Quite a few early morning risers were already at the point, and the small parking area was full.

The treasure seekers were glad to catch their breath and enjoy the view after climbing the fifty stairs to reach the overlook.

However, even after catching their breath, and looking around for several minutes, they

found no green castle. In fact, they could find no castle of any kind, anywhere. None of the houses visible from Majestic Point looked like castles. Nor were there any rock formations resembling castles in the area.

The overlook did have a telescopic viewer which cost a quarter to operate. Hector put a quarter in so that Lisa could use the viewer to look for a castle. She didn't find anything. However, when Cassie looked through the viewer, she did discover something interesting—a green street sign for Castle Way.

Since they could find nothing else that fit, they decided that the street sign for Castle Way must be the castle of Grandpa's game.

Castle Way was another half-mile walk. "Grandpa certainly wanted us to get our exercise," said Hector, as they hurried along.

When they reached the street, which was really a cul-de-sac, they consulted the instructions and began looking for an arch beside a water feature.

As they toured the block, Lisa said, "So we're looking for things like fountains and wading pools and fishponds."

“And maybe rain barrels, or birdbaths,” said Cassie.

The others couldn’t think of anything else that might be considered a water feature.

After searching the entire block, they found no water features; however, there was an arched brick entryway in front of one of the larger houses on Castle Way. A fireplug was situated just to one side of the arch.

“That could be considered a water feature,” said Enilsa, smiling at her grandfather’s unique perspective.

“This must be it,” said Tim, “because we never saw any other arches on the block.”

Crowding together on the sidewalk, they looked through the arch, which perfectly framed the house set far back from the road. A winding flagstone walkway led to the front door.

Again consulting the instructions, Cassie said, “We are looking for odd glass.”

“One window is different than the others,” Lisa observed.

“Yes,” agreed Tim. “They are all rectangles except that small octagonal one set higher than the others.”

“It’s probably a window in a stairwell,” remarked Enilsa, “like our neighbors at home. The Cantwell’s have an oval stained-glass window in a wall by their staircase. It’s really pretty. From the outside, it looks about as high up as that one.”

“So the shape of this one is what’s important,” said Hector.

“An octagon,” added Enilsa. “That’s the second clue.”

“So when we put the two clues together,” said Tim, “we get a pool octagon.”

Again, Enilsa thought that they had found the clue too easily, and she felt slightly disappointed. When she mentioned this, Hector said, “Grandpa probably didn’t want to make anyone struggle. He wanted someone to find the treasure. Not everyone is an expert at this kind of stuff like you are.”

Shrugging off Hector’s comment, Enilsa asked, “So is the answer maybe an octagonal pool? Is that what we’re supposed to be looking for?”

“That’s a good guess,” said Lisa.

“As far as I know,” said Tim, “there are no octagonal pools on Swan Cove Island.

“What about other octagons, like the window?” asked Enilsa.

As they talked, the group started heading back towards downtown.

“One of our neighbors at home has an octagonal picnic table,” said Hector, “but I’ve never seen one on the island.”

“Sailor’s Valentines are traditionally octagonal,” said Lisa.

“But this has something to do with a pool,” replied Enilsa, “an octagon pool.”

At this point, Cassie felt the need to interrupt. “I think it is pool octagon, not octagon pool,” she said. “Otherwise, your grandpa would have listed the clues in a different order, and we would have found the octagon first.”

“What if it’s an anagram puzzle?” Tim suddenly asked.

Enilsa was really good at anagrams. The group stopped as she pulled a pencil out of her pocket and wrote the two clue words on the back of the paper containing *The Grandpa Game*.

After ten minutes of trying to mix up the letters to form different words, they were never able to come up with anything they thought made sense relating to finding a treasure.

As the others continued to ponder, Cassie, somewhat impatiently, insisted, “I still think it is what it is—a pool octagon. ‘Put the two together and you’ll find something valuable,’” she quoted.

Meanwhile, Tim had finally figured out something that had been spinning around in the back of his mind, and he loudly exclaimed, “Snakes!” The others looked at him in surprise as he excitedly added, “The game says to watch out for snakes.” As his friends continued to stare at him questioningly, Tim stated, “Mrs. Pool has a pet snake. And she has a gazebo shaped like an octagon on her back lawn. So that’s a pool octagon.”

The group had started walking again, this time faster than before, because they now seemed to be getting somewhere.

“I remember the snake story from school when I was little,” Tim added. “Someone said Mrs. Pool had a pet snake and that it ate her pet parrot. I guess I forgot about that over the years. Mrs. Pool was always so strange that the snake and parrot story didn’t particularly seem out of place for her.”

“So according to the instructions, we should be able to find something valuable at Mrs. Pool’s gazebo,” said Enilsa.

The others agreed that they probably had hit on the right location.

Chapter Nine

Evening Escapade

Grandma Josie was out for the afternoon when the group arrived back at the house. They decided this was a good thing, since they were reluctant to tell her that the progress of *The Grandpa Game* had led them to needing to find a way to explore Mrs. Pool's gazebo.

"Her property is completely fenced off," said Tim.

"Does she have No Trespassing signs put up?" asked Lisa.

"No," answered Tim, "but I can pretty much guarantee you that No Trespassing is implied by the fence."

"We can just ask her if we can look at her gazebo," suggested Cassie.

Both Tim and Hector did not think this was a good idea; and from what both Enilsa and Lisa had heard about Mrs. Pool, they also leaned in the direction of steering clear of the woman.

“She doesn’t have any dogs,” said Tim, “so it should be pretty easy to sneak in. We can do it right after the play tonight.”

Hector was already on board with this, and he told Enilsa and Cassie, “We can tell Grandma Josie that we’re going to hang out with Tim and Lisa after the play and that we’ll be back sort of late.”

“Can you come tonight too?” Tim asked Lisa.

“Yes,” said Lisa, “as long as we’re not out too late.”

“It shouldn’t take long,” said Tim.

Cassie was still a little skeptical; however, since she was definitely outnumbered, she didn’t argue with her friends. Plus, she couldn’t see any real harm in paying a brief nighttime visit to a gazebo, even one behind a fence on private property. And if the gazebo did contain a treasure, Mrs. Pool would probably want to know about it.

Grandma Josie had had a busy day and was planning a busy evening that included going to

dinner and bingo with friends, so she didn't even ask if Enilsa, Cassie, and Hector had made any progress with *The Grandpa Game*. And the only thing she said when they asked if they could stay out late was "No problem, just be careful."

The treasure hunters met just outside the downtown theatre at nine o'clock. The evening performance had wrapped up about fifteen minutes before, so Lisa had had plenty of time to take off her makeup and change out of her costume. Everyone in the group had gotten permission to be out until eleven on this particular evening, so they thought they would have plenty of time for their gazebo project.

The entrance to Mrs. Pool's estate was less than a quarter mile from the theatre. Walking briskly, they reached her gate quickly.

"It would be better to sneak in from the side," Tim told his friends.

Mrs. Pool's neighbors' estates were not fenced, and the group found an easy path through the trees and bushes paralleling the left side fence of the property. They walked for nearly ten minutes, with Tim leading the way, before stopping at a place marked by a particularly tall palm tree. Since they could hear

the ocean waves quite well from this spot, Tim was pretty sure they were nearing the sea cliffs bordering the rear of Mrs. Pool's property.

Though the wrought iron fence was six feet high, it was not the type that had pointed spires on top, so they were able to scale it without risking serious injury. Lisa twisted her ankle slightly jumping from the fence to the ground inside the estate, but it wasn't serious and she was able to walk it off.

As it turns out, Tim had picked a very good spot for them to enter Mrs. Pool's yard because after sneaking only about twenty feet through the shrubs, they easily spotted the gazebo just beyond a small rose arbor.

In the light of the stars and the nearly full moon, the bright white gazebo stood out brilliantly from the greenery and shadows surrounding it. The gazebo was fairly large and was trimmed with lattices, crawling with wisteria, around the bottom and along three of the sides.

From inside the gazebo, they had a perfect view of the Swan Cove Lighthouse. However, they were more interested in looking upwards (following Grandpa's instructions) than looking

outwards; and it didn't take long for Hector to spy an object that looked like a small box wedged between two of the exposed rafters near the center of the gazebo's ceiling. Unfortunately, at the exact moment he pointed to the box, they got caught.

Mr. Davidson, who had been taking a late stroll, had noticed the activity at the gazebo. However, he had expected the visitors to be nosy tourists, and he was very surprised to find that the group of trespassers included mostly locals. Shooting very disapproving looks at both Tim and Hector, the gardener sighed heavily and said in an almost weary manner, "You'd better come up to the house."

They followed Mr. Davidson silently, without trying to explain anything just yet. However, Cassie's brain worked feverishly during the entire long trek up to the house.

Mrs. Pool, lounging on a puffy red divan in her living room, was very surprised to have so many unexpected visitors. She looked quizzically from face to face, as Mr. Davidson told her, "I found them snooping around the gazebo."

“Is that so?” said Mrs. Pool. “And what were they snooping for?” She actually didn’t look angry as she said this; instead, she looked somewhat amused.

Deciding to take Hector’s earlier advice that had worked with Grandma Josie (about being completely honest), Cassie immediately stepped forward. After introducing herself, she said, “We’re very sorry to have trespassed, but we wanted to have a look at your gazebo.” She then very quickly related the details of *The Grandpa Game* to Mrs. Pool and Mr. Davidson. By the time she finished, Mr. Davidson looked both annoyed and amused, and Mrs. Pool was laughing.

“This is a hoot!” Mrs. Pool exclaimed. After insisting that her visitors “Have a seat,” she sent Mr. Davidson to the kitchen to obtain a snack for them. While he was gone, Mrs. Pool introduced the guests to her two boa constrictors, currently curled up in a glass pen in the corner of the enormous living room. Omar was very large, and Fritz was slightly smaller. Mrs. Pool’s pet parrot, Alice, apparently alive and well, called “*Hello, pretty girl!*” to them from her cage in another corner of the room.

When Mr. Davidson returned, they all enjoyed warm scones spread with butter and jam, and they washed the scones down with tall glasses of chocolate milk. Mrs. Pool wanted more information about *The Grandpa Game*, and they took turns telling her about the painting, the cave in Duck Cove, and their discovery of the two clues.

Mrs. Pool was thrilled with their quest. As soon as she heard about the box in the rafters of the gazebo, she jumped up from the couch. Pulling on her tennis shoes and grabbing a couple of flashlights from a closet in the hall, she commanded Mr. Davidson to “Get a ladder down there!”

By now, Mr. Davidson was also caught up in the excitement, and he hurried to retrieve the ladder he kept in the storage shed behind his small house. Since the shed wasn’t far from the gazebo, it didn’t take long to get the ladder and set it up.

Hector helped Mr. Davidson hold the ladder steady, as Tim climbed up to explore the rafters. Cassie and Lisa held the flashlights, as Mrs. Pool and Enilsa watched.

The box wedged between the rafters was an old metal lunch box, and Tim had some difficulty getting it loose. When he finally managed to yank it free, he climbed down and presented the box to Enilsa, who could barely breathe.

“The light’s better up at the house,” Mrs. Pool quietly suggested.

The others agreed, and quickly escorted Enilsa, who was cradling the box as though it was the most precious object in the world, up to the house.

Mrs. Pool bid Enilsa to place the lunchbox in the middle of her coffee table so that everyone could watch as she opened it. Mr. Davidson spread a knit throw over the table so the metal box wouldn’t scratch the wood. Enilsa then carefully placed the box on top of the throw and took a deep breath as she knelt beside the table to unfasten the clasps of the box and slowly lift the lid.

The contents of the box were not at all surprising to Enilsa, since she had known her grandfather very well. And she smiled with pleasure as she gingerly unpacked a yo-yo, four marbles, a small pocket knife, toy lead soldiers

with a canon, a fishing lure, a post card of the Golden Gate Bridge, and a baseball pennant with several team pins attached. The treasure also included a stack of bubble gum wrapper cartoons, a small key, a plastic action figure, a toy metal car, one dime, two Indian head pennies, and a pencil box.

Thinking that the key might be a clue to unlocking something valuable, Hector became really excited, until Mr. Davidson told him that the key probably belonged to the pencil box. Mr. Davidson was right; the key unlocked the pencil box, which simply contained pencils.

“That looks like a silver dime,” remarked Mrs. Pool, “but silver dimes and Indian head pennies aren’t valuable enough to be considered treasures. However,” she added, pointing to the action figure, “that is Major Matt Mason. And he’s in good shape, so he might be worth something.” Mrs. Pool then walked over to her fireplace mantle, which was full of family photos, to indicate a picture of two boys, one in a wheelchair, as she told them, “My son kept all of his Major Matt Mason figures from childhood and recently sold some of them on one of those

online auction sites. I think he got about seventy-five dollars each for them.”

Tim, Lisa, Cassie, and Hector felt a little disappointed not to have solved a mystery leading to a real treasure. However, Enilsa wasn't disappointed at all, and she was excited about the prospect of showing her grandmother the fruits of *The Grandpa Game*. As she was carefully repacking the lunch box, Cassie suddenly exclaimed, “It’s nearly eleven.” Since their curfew on this night was much later than any of them were normally allowed to stay out, nobody wanted to be even one second late getting home.

Enilsa quickly packed up the last of the lunchbox contents as they said goodbye to Mrs. Pool and Mr. Davidson. Mrs. Pool hurriedly wrapped up the leftover scones and packed them in a paper bag with a jar of jam as a gift for Enilsa’s grandmother.

As they were leaving, Alice told them, “*Bye bye, you guys!*”

Stepping out onto the front porch, Tim said, “Goodbye, Mrs. Pool.”

“Goodbye, Timothy,” she replied. “Next time, use the doorbell.”

“Yes ma’am, I will.”

“And don’t be a stranger,” Mrs. Pool added.
“I only put up the fence to keep the tourists out.”

Chapter Ten

The Real Treasure

Grandma Josie was waiting up for Enilsa, Hector, and Cassie. When they arrived, she told them, “Mrs. Pool just called. She said that she invited you in for scones and jam, so you might be a couple of minutes late.”

Enilsa then filled her grandmother in on most of the details of their treasure hunt. (Since Grandma Josie hadn’t asked, and Mrs. Pool hadn’t told on them, Enilsa decided to skip the part of the story as to how their first visit to the gazebo came about.)

Hector helped by saying, “Mrs. Pool was really nice and got a ladder for us.”

Grandma Josie was delighted with the contents of the lunchbox, and she laughed as she

told them, “Grandpa was so playful, and mischievous. He would have loved the idea of someone hunting down his boyhood trinkets as a treasure.

“Well, time for bed,” she added. “We can sort through this stuff in the morning, so you two can divvy it up properly.”

“You mean, you don’t want to keep it?” asked Enilsa.

“No,” answered Grandma Josie. “I have enough things to remember your grandpa by. I think he would have wanted you to have this stuff. But you need to pick a couple of things for Harold to have, so I want to see how you split it up.”

Hector and Enilsa agreed that this was a good idea.

Shooing them off to bed, Grandma Josie finished with, “Grandpa painted the gazebo for Mrs. Pool about six years ago. Actual paint on the gazebo,” she explained, “not a painting of it. So that’s probably when he thought all of this up.”

In the morning, Cassie and Enilsa began packing because they were planning to leave the following day to spend two days at Enilsa’s aunt

and uncle's house in Blaineville before heading home.

As she was wrapping several sea shells in tissue paper, Enilsa started thinking about *The Grandpa Game*. Something was bothering her, so she retrieved the paper with the instructions in order to read the last two lines.

However...

the real treasure lies underneath.

Finding Hector and Cassie downstairs, she showed them the paper and said, "I wonder if we found what we were supposed to—a real treasure underneath something."

"Maybe the box was under the gazebo at one time," Hector speculated, "and someone moved it."

Cassie was shaking her head. "Then why did he tell us to look up?" she said. "I think that box stayed right where he put it, which means we were probably supposed to find something else."

However, even after puzzling over the problem for several hours, they couldn't come up with any good ideas as to what the final part of *The Grandpa Game* meant.

Cassie, Enilsa, and Hector met Tim and Lisa in the late afternoon for a final swim. However, they saved their goodbyes for the next day because Tim and Lisa were planning to come to the ferry to see them off.

After a quick breakfast the next morning, Hector crammed all of their suitcases into the trunk of Grandma Josie's car, and they all hurried to catch the ferry. Hector's parents, and back-from-camp Harold, were going to meet them on the other side. At the end of their planned two-day stay, Enilsa's aunt and uncle would be driving Cassie and Enilsa to a point halfway between Blaineville and West Bend to meet Enilsa's parents. The grownups had decided this was better than having the girls ride the bus because the bus lines were currently experiencing a drivers' strike. Even with extra security, travelers sometimes ended up amidst angry picketers, which made riding the commercial bus not quite as safe as usual.

They made it to the ferry early, which gave them plenty of time to exchange email and regular addresses with Tim and Lisa before saying goodbye. After Tim and Lisa left, Cassie and Enilsa sat on a bench to wait for the boat,

while Hector and Grandma Josie took a stroll about the large dock.

Tired of puzzling over *The Grandpa Game*, Enilsa's mind turned to the painting. She had taken several pictures of it, and was planning to print some enlarged copies at home, so she could continue to study it. She also wanted to frame one of the pictures to put up in her room.

As the ferry approached, and Grandma Josie and Hector were returning from their stroll, Cassie noticed a little girl, sitting on a bench across from them, eating a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Cassie smiled because there was probably more peanut butter and jelly on the front of the girl's jumper than was ending up inside her; so the girl was, literally, wearing her sandwich.

However, Cassie stopped smiling as she suddenly thought of something. *Jelly!* Turning quickly to Grandma Josie, Cassie surprised everyone when she asked, "Is there any way we can catch the afternoon ferry?"

Grandma Josie, taken aback, wasn't able to respond right away, so Cassie hurried to explain. "I think we missed something really important

about the painting, and we should have another look at it.”

Without even hearing the details, Grandma Josie immediately agreed that they could catch the later ferry, and she quickly used her cell phone to call Hector’s parents to change their meeting time to the afternoon.

As they piled into the car to return to Grandma Josie’s house, Cassie excitedly told them, “I think the last two lines of *The Grandpa Game* refer to the painting.”

“You mean there might be something valuable hidden on the back, or underneath the frame?” Hector asked.

Cassie couldn’t say yet because she wanted to be sure before telling her friends what she suspected.

Since the light in the den wasn’t very bright, Hector carefully carried the painting out to the front porch so they could examine it.

Pointing to the top corner where Harold had dripped jelly, Cassie said, “See what is underneath?” As they peered closely at the spot, she added, “I don’t think that’s just a smudge, or a jelly stain. It looks like maybe there’s something else underneath.”

“Like maybe another painting!” Enilsa exclaimed.

Cassie nodded.

Grandma Josie immediately got her reading glasses, along with some cotton swabs and a glass of water.

Dipping one of the swabs into the water, she rubbed hard on the jelly spot, which definitely uncovered something painted underneath the clouds at the top of Grandpa’s painting.

Using a second swab, Grandma Josie carefully widened the area she was working on to reveal what looked like a tuft of grass next to a rock. As she continued to scrub with the swabs, she uncovered a nearly three-inch circle of the original painting, which revealed a wildflower-adorned cliff top.

“Come to think of it,” said Grandma Josie, “I remember your Grandpa picking up a lot of paintings from garage sales over the years. They weren’t particularly our style of art, but he said he wanted to paint over them. Art supplies can be pretty pricy, and he was trying to be economical.”

“Maybe the original painting is valuable,” breathed Enilsa.

“...*the real treasure lies underneath,*” said Cassie.

“This must be what Grandpa meant,” said Hector.

“We could ask Mr. Dan’s advice,” Enilsa suddenly thought. “I bet he knows a lot about art.”

The others agreed this was a good idea.

Carefully wrapping the painting in a soft blanket, they all piled into the car to head to the library.

Mr. Dan was pleased to see them, and he was intrigued with their find. Examining the painting beneath the painting, he said, “Without seeing a larger section, I wouldn’t be able to recognize the artist, or the painting, even if it’s a famous work.

“But it’s good that you stopped working on it when you did,” he added. “Experts usually do this type of work, so they don’t damage the art.

“I can tell you who to take this to in Blaineville,” Mr. Dan said, fishing through a drawer of his desk to produce a business card of an art appraiser named Arnold Gullick. “He should be able to tell you who painted this, and if it’s valuable.” Smiling as he picked up the

phone, Mr. Dan added, “I can get you an appointment.”

In only a short conversation, Mr. Dan had a late afternoon appointment scheduled for them with Mr. Gullick at his office in an art museum in Blaineville. “That should give you enough time to make it downtown from the ferry,” said Mr. Dan, as he hung up.

Grandma Josie made sure to call Hector’s parents to tell them she would be bringing Enilsa, Hector, and Cassie to their house in the evening, after their visit to the appraiser.

When they made it back to the house, they carefully stored the blanket-wrapped painting in Grandma Josie’s bedroom, since it was least likely to be disturbed in that room during the day. Then Cassie called Tim and Lisa, who were greatly surprised, to invite them to lunch and give them an update on the treasure hunt.

After lunch, Enilsa, Cassie, and Hector once again said goodbye to their friends, and promised to let them know the outcome as soon as possible.

Grandma Josie took her car on the ferry, which was something she hardly ever did because the public transportation in Blaineville

was so good for shopping and other errands. But since they had a lot of luggage to haul, along with a possibly valuable painting, she decided that her car was a much better choice.

Mr. Gullick was thrilled to see them, and welcomed them heartily. He had prearranged for the painting to be taken to one of the museum's labs. A technician assisted Mr. Gullick in positioning the painting under a viewing device with a special light. "It's called x-ray radiography," the technician explained, "and it allows us to see under the top layers of paint."

"Reused canvases are not uncommon," said Mr. Gullick.

Grandma Josie was nodding.

The x-ray machine revealed a beautiful stretch of flower-covered cliff tops watching over a glittering beach and frothy sea. After only a few moments study, Mr. Gullick told them, "If this is what I think it is, it is very valuable."

Nodding, the technician said, "Roderick Cole."

"Exactly," said Mr. Gullick. "He did mostly seascapes, but not very many of them, which is

why his work is so valuable, because it's so rare. He died in 1925, I think."

"What's the next step then?" asked Grandma Josie.

"I'd like to send this off to be restored," said Mr. Gullick. "We don't have anyone here right now trained to do that. We'll heavily insure the work, of course, and you'll get a receipt. Then, if you'd like us to help you sell it, we can."

"Sounds good," said Grandma Josie, as Mr. Gullick left to get a form for her to fill out.

"It's a good thing I took pictures of Grandpa's painting," said Enilsa, who was somewhat sad that the work of art known as *Swan Cove Island* would soon no longer exist.

"Your grandpa would have wanted me to do this," said Grandma Josie, putting her arm around Enilsa's shoulders and giving her a hug.

"I know," Enilsa agreed, smiling. "And I'll send you a picture of Grandpa's painting as soon as we get home."

"He definitely would have wanted you to sell it," said Hector.

"I think you're right," Grandma Josie responded, "especially because this means I probably won't have to sell the silver. Grandpa

would much rather that I have only a picture of his painting, if it means I get to keep our anniversary silver.”

When the painting sold six weeks later, Grandma Josie not only got to keep her silver, she also had enough money to take a trip to Europe. And when she got back, she bought a computer and music keyboard so that she could start taking piano lessons at home.

After their brief stay in Blaineville, Enilsa’s aunt and uncle drove Cassie and Enilsa to meet Enilsa’s parents. Hector stayed home to supervise Harold because there wasn’t room in the car for six people.

The girls were quiet on the trip home. In addition to taking in the scenery, they were still trying to take in everything that had happened over the last few days. Indeed, the entire summer had turned out to be very surprising, and it was a little hard to believe they had found three treasures in less than two months. However, set to start school in four days, Cassie and Enilsa were anxious to get home and get ready.

As the car slowed to pass through a small town, the girls noticed a sidewalk art fair set up

in front of several downtown shops. Admiring the paintings as they passed, Enilsa was suddenly confused about something. Why would her grandfather make the clue to find *The Grandpa Game* instructions look like a cliff that wasn't part of the island? And why did he have an arrow pointing to the cave? They really hadn't spent much time in the cave. What if it really did contain a treasure?

“Maybe we were supposed to dig for it?” said Enilsa, as she told Cassie her thoughts. “He might not have even known the canvas he reused was valuable, and he could have been talking about digging in the cave when he said ‘underneath’. Maybe he meant underneath a rock.”

Cassie took her time in answering her friend. “Your grandfather knew a lot about art. He even studied up on it. I think he did know that the painting was valuable, and it was the treasure he meant for someone to find.”

After thinking for a few moments longer, Cassie added, “But if you're right, and there is something valuable in the cave, maybe someone else should have the chance to find it. We've found enough treasure for the time being.”

Smiling, Enilsa had to agree, and she nodded as she said, “Yes, if there’s treasure on Swan Cove Island, I think we should probably let someone else find it.”

About the Author

J.H. Sweet is the author of *The Fairy Chronicles*, *Foo and Friends*, *The Time Entity Trilogy*, *Juan Noel's Crystal Airship*, *Cassie Kingston Mysteries*, and *The Heaviest Things*. She lives in South Texas and has a degree in English from Texas State University.

jhsweet.com

Cassie Kingston Mysteries

Mysteries seem to be seeking out Cassie Kingston and her best friend, Enilsa Santos. Their adventures begin unexpectedly, and the pair end up solving four mysteries during one summer break. With help from several friends, Cassie and Enilsa outwit a clever forger, find real treasure, solve a mystery involving a bronze statue, save a house from being demolished, and uncover the truth about a strange painting of an island. *Ages 8+*

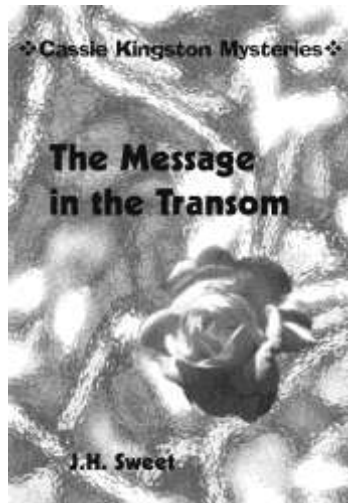
Cassie Kingston Mysteries in Print

The Message in the Transom
The Candlewick Inn Mystery
The Statue in Glen Park
The Painting of Swan Cove Island

Future adventures include *The Mockingbird Ridge Puzzle*, *The Caricature Conundrum*, *The Haunting of Blackwell Manor*, and *The View from Keltons*.

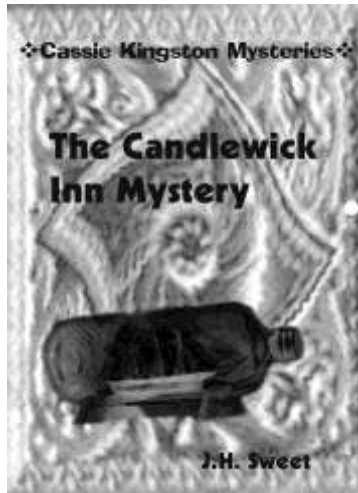
The Message in the Transom

While helping to transplant rosebushes, Cassie and Enilsa, along with two of their friends, begin to uncover secrets involving an old house. Following a series of clues that begins with a strange message in a stained-glass transom, the friends work to save the house from demolition. With both diligence and ingenuity, the new sleuths end up finding something so valuable, it can only be described as *A Treasure Beyond Measure*.



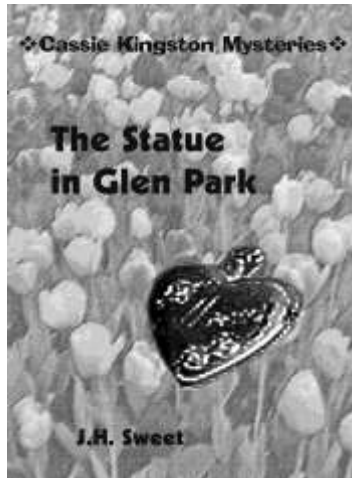
The Candlewick Inn Mystery

Surely, it can't be possible to find two treasures in one summer. But that's exactly what Cassie and Enilsa are trying to do. While spending two weeks helping out at the Candlewick Inn, a property Cassie's cousin will soon inherit from their late Great-Aunt Sybil, the girls find several clues relating to something valuable hidden at the inn. While investigating, they receive messages from a psychic, and even a note from Great-Aunt Sybil herself, which help them solve *The Candlewick Inn Mystery*.



The Statue in Glen Park

Upon returning from Glen Park, and looking at photographs from the outing, Cassie and Enilsa are shocked to discover that a serious crime was apparently committed right under their unsuspecting noses. But could this possibly be a classic case where the camera lens sees something very different than the human eye? However, as their investigation unfolds, an unexpected turn of events leads the girls to believe that a fanciful bronze statue may hold the real answer to the mystery.



Also by J.H. Sweet

Foo and Friends

What are your lawn and garden ornaments up to when no one is looking? If they hold magical spirits like most gnomes, angels, gargoyles, and foo dogs, you can bet it's something pretty important. Join Foo and his Friends on some of their important adventures as they help keep our neighborhoods safe and in tip-top shape. *For read aloud and early chapter readers ages 6+*



The Wishing Well

Magical foo dogs generally work in pairs to protect us from evil spirits. Unfortunately, Foo no longer has his partner because Foo-Too was taken away to the Resting Place of Retired Fooks. Having to make it on his own is bad enough, but Foo also has to get used to living in a brand new neighborhood. Thank goodness he is meeting plenty of other magical lawn and garden ornaments who can help him figure things out.



The Garage Sale

Bad news has fallen on the neighborhood: Some of the Friends are going to be sold in a big garage sale. Foo Magic doesn't really work to solve problems like this, so a midnight meeting is definitely called for. But as the Friends work on a plan to save Henrietta (the plastic owl), will they also have time to save a turtle sandbox named Ruben? More panic erupts when Gilbert, the wire reindeer, also gets added to the list of For-Sale items. Can it be stopped, or is it meant to be? And will the neighborhood ever be the same again?



The Fake Foo

Foo dogs, gargoyles, garden angels, and gnomes all have the ability to protect people from harm, which is why Foo is so puzzled as to why his new neighbors would place useless, for-decoration-only statues outside their home. However, when several evil spirits invade the neighborhood, Foo must figure out a way to help the Fake Foo protect their house and the people inside.



The Porch Swing Ghost

As if having to drive away a persistent ghost over and over again isn't bad enough, Foo must also battle a Foo Cold during the Annual Fix-Up-the-Playground Project. Things go from bad to worse when a rash of burglaries, by a very crafty burglar, hits the neighborhood. With so much going on, will Foo be able to take care of business as usual? And will anyone be able to find out who is playing doorbell tricks?



Juan Noel's Crystal Airship
The Story of a
Christmas Eve Legend

On a magical six-hour Christmas Eve journey aboard the Crystal Airship, managed by Juan Noel, four children and various other passengers hopscotch the countries and continents of the world, making important deliveries to help keep hopes and dreams alive. *For all ages.*



The Heaviest Things

How can we lift something extremely heavy when we can't see or touch the thing? In an effort to help an elderly neighbor, ten-year-old Henry Goodwin sets out to discover how some of the heaviest and most mysterious things on earth have been moved. His research yields surprising results when he meets a real-life Paul Bunyan, has a conversation with the god Atlas, and takes a trip to the North Pole. However, even after traveling far and wide, Henry discovers that the answer to his own problem lies much closer to home. *Ages 8+*

