

Excerpt

You Can Make a Difference , Maddie Morrison

Maddie came to first. She tried to prop herself up on one elbow, but slumped back to the floor. Then, slowly she sat up and looked around.

“What happened? Bobby, where are you? What happened?” she asked again. Hazy memories arguing with Bobby over the book began to take shape. But then the rest was foggy. “Bobby,” Maddie called again and then as she looked around her instincts told her to whisper. “C’mon, Bobby, answer me. You’re scaring me now,” Maddie whispered and began to walk around slowly. Her fear grew both because she couldn’t find Bobby and she had no idea where she was! Everything looked strange and the furnishings look old. She felt like she was in one of those stores from the antique mall her mom loved so much.

Maddie scanned the room looking for something familiar. “Ooh,” she yelled forgetting to stifle herself. Maddie tripped on the leg of an ornate piano and tumbled onto a chair. It was a very scratchy landing.

“Yeesh, how could anyone sit in such an uncomfortable chair? This cushion feels like the horse I rode last summer at camp.” she whined as she looked around the room. “And, where is Bobby?” Maddie slowly pulled herself out of the chair and looked for a phone, thinking she might need some help. There was a loud groan. She wasn’t sure where it came from so she listened for another sound. There it was again. It came from behind the couch by the front window. She shielded her eyes from the afternoon sun streaming through the window. She hoped it was Bobby behind the couch and tiptoed over to get a better look.

Then from another room came the soft rumbling of someone coming down the stairs. Maddie still had no idea where she was or if it even was Bobby behind the couch. The rumbling sound got louder and instinct told her to duck behind the couch no matter what she found.

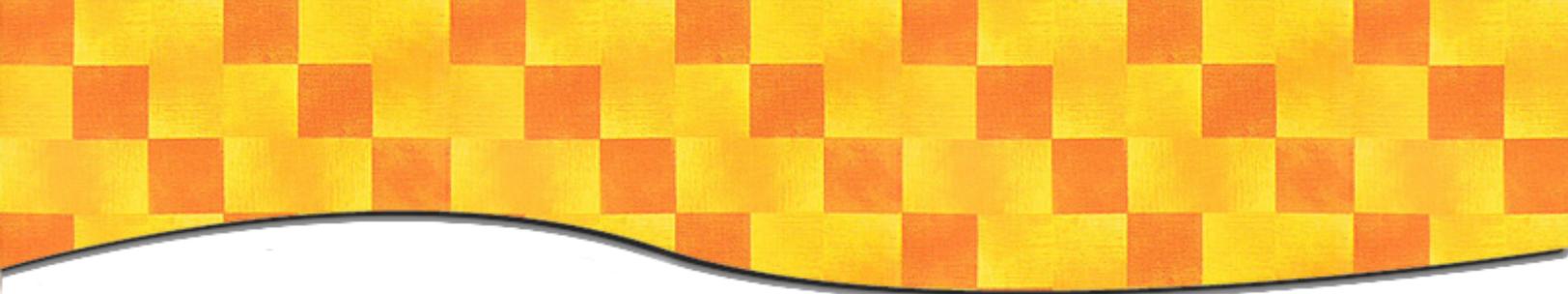
“Maddie, where have you been? Where are we? What happened? My head is killing me.” Thank god it was Bobby. But he was still groggy. He had more questions, but Maddie clamped her hand over his mouth to keep him quiet.

“Shhh, someone is coming,” she whispered and gave a look that said I don’t know what is happening, either.

But Bobby was too curious to keep quiet. He struggled to break free from her grasp just as they heard someone enter the room.

“Owww,” Maddie screamed. Bobby had bitten her. She quickly covered her own mouth, but it was too late.

“Someone is in here,” Maddie mouthed to Bobby who had forgotten all his questions and peeked his head up to look over the couch. He found himself face to face with a boy, poised on the couch cushion, who looked as shocked as he did.



“AHHHH,” they yelled out, fell backwards, and jumped back up to look straight at each other again. The boy slipped off the couch and fell against an end table, which among other things held a fragile-looking vase.

“Oh, no!” Maddie dove to catch the vase but again it was too late. It smashed into pieces on the floor amidst the other items from the table. Still dazed, she instinctively reached to pick up the glass and finally found something familiar in the room.

She looked at the object in her hands and slowly turned to show it to Bobby. He met her glance and then they both looked at the strange boy. “Bobby, it’s Teddy’s clock!”

“How do you know my name?” The boy asked with a puzzled stare.

“Oh...my...gosh. Look at the time,” Maddie said to Bobby ignoring the boy’s question. “It’s 2:23! This is totally weird, Bobby. What is going on?” she said each word deliberately and then turned to confront the boy.

“Who are you? And where are we, anyway?”

“I think I should ask you that question. You have both entered my home without my knowledge and have broken my mother’s porcelain vase and most likely caused my favorite clock to stop working.” He eyed the clock in Maddie’s hand.

“I don’t know how we got here.” Maddie remembered what had happened. “We were working on a report on Teddy Roosevelt and we started arguing over a book.”

“Right,” Bobby continued. “I wanted to look at the book and you wouldn’t give it back to me and then somehow it flew across the room right at Teddy’s clock.”

Once again Maddie and Bobby looked at each other, at the clock, and at the boy. Everyone was confused.

“Well, it seems you have found your way into my home. And for some reason you know who I am. But I am at a disadvantage because I do not have the slightest idea who you are.”

“But we don’t know who you are. We don’t even know where we are,” Maddie replied with concern.

