

Dear Diary

You will never guess what has happened to me! I have been **plunged** into a **world** I never quite believed in and if I am completely honest, I never **saw** this coming. I feel very **overwhelmed**.

As you know, I have **moved** into a **huge, dusty, vintage house** as **filthy** as a **shack**. **In fact**, it is more like a dozen **shacks** that have been stacked on top of one another!

Every now and then, I had been **hearing** sounds in the **old walls** that sounded like scratches or **small footprints**. It made me feel **nervous** because I was unsure what it was and part of me just wished that it would go away.

Yesterday, **Mallory** picked up an **old broom** in the **kitchen** and held it like it was a **baseball bat**. She **quickly swung** the **bat** at the **pale, dull, worn wall** and **plaster** came **scattering** to the **floor** beneath our **feet** like **flour** and a **huge hole** appeared (I knew Mom would blame me for it— she always does!).

Hesitantly, I **stepped** towards the **ominous hole** and I **felt** the **hairs** on my **arms** stand up. **To my amazement**, inside were the most **bizarre objects**! A **doll's head** **lolloped** in one corner. **Dead cockroaches** were strung up like garlands. **Tiny soldiers** with **melted hands** and **feet** were scattered all over like **autumn leaves** resting on the **ground**.

All of a sudden, the **mysterious noise** came back again! I had to **quietly squeeze** myself into the **dumbwaiter** (that's where all the objects came from in the wall by the way) and it was really **dirty** inside and it smelled like **old wood**.

After a while, I arrived in a **secretive room** that had a **low ceiling** and **crowded bookshelves** **surrounded** me. **Slowly**, I **looked** around the **room** and I realised there was no **door**! What a **strange place** it was!

Bravely, I began to **explore** the **creepy room**. I found an **array** of **objects** like **old books**, a pair of **round glasses**, a **large** watercolour **painting** of a **little girl** and a **man pleasantly playing** on the **lawn** and a **note**. **Just as I was feeling confident**, the **peculiar noises** returned along with my **Mom**! So, I had to go back downstairs, I felt so **disappointed** because I really wanted to stay longer to **find** more clues.

This morning, the craziest thing happened! My **alarm clock** didn't wake me up... **Mallory's loud screaming** did! Something had **tied** her **long, silky, brown hair** to the **bed** and of course I got the blame! It wasn't me and it **wasn't Simon**. I felt very **confused**!

Certainly curious, I knew what I needed to do. I used the clues from the **strange note** I **found** yesterday and **bravely made** my way up to the **undisturbed attic**. **Eventually**, when I got there the **room** I **entered** was **bright** and **small** with **dusty windows** on all sides. There wasn't much in the **room**, only an **old trunk**, a Victrola, a **small stool** and rolls of **faded fabric**.

Nervously, I **opened** the **large, dry, neglected trunk**. Nothing inside looked like it was a secret or something to be hidden, there was simply **moth-eaten clothes** inside. I felt **disappointed** because I was **eagerly** hoping to **find** something **fascinating**!

Using the clues in the **note** I **found**, I knew there was something in the **trunk** but it took me a while to work out where. **Eventually**, a **secret compartment** **popped** open! **Excited beyond reason**, I **quickly reached** inside and **found** an **old crumbling book** that smelt like **burnt paper**.