

The Mysteries of Harris Burdick

Thursday

Alex
Treadaway,
Age: 13
The Harp

Grandfather rocked slowly on the rocker, descending back and rising slowly. His dark eyes were cast down on the boy before him. The wrinkles that decorated his lips and skin were sagging. His hair ... it had turned a dark shade of silver that caught the light.

"She was beautiful... indeed she was," he quietly said over and over again.

"Who was, Grandfather?" The boy replied.

As a mere boy of only eight, he was certainly curious of a great many things. His dirt brown hair fell in a messy heap upon his head. His eyes were alight with the wonderment of a small boy.

"Her name was Seline," Grandfather said, gazing towards the window to look past the forest, towards the beyond where the rocks shimmered in the early morning light, and the water from the stream was cool as it touched the skin. How the trees made a canopy with their higher branches in the late afternoon.

"The Harp. Everyday I went down there and watched her play it her fingers gliding across the strings," Grandfather smiled, his wrinkly lips turning upward.

"And she never once saw me."

The boy immediately filled with joy. "Do you think she's still there!? Oh, lets go see!"

Grandfather laughed, "I haven't seen her in ages but sometimes at night I can still hear her play the harp." Muffy, the scruffy Catahoula dog that was lying at the boys feet, began to walk around nervously. The boy stood up and walked to the door. "I'm going to take her for a walk, Grandfather."

Still gazing at the window, the man nodded.

The boy had never been in the woods that surrounded the house, but now that he was fumbling with the branches around him, he wished he had. Muffy was ahead, wagging her tail in excitement as she led the boy further into the forest. Suddenly she stopped. And that's when the boy noticed where they were.

The rocks shimmered in the early morning light, the trees made a canopy with their branches. The water from the stream looked cool, calm...perfect. Then the water started to ripple and spread apart to make way for a body emerging from the water. She had dark red hair that shimmered down her back, giving her complexion a pale look. She sat silently beside a harp that was placed neatly on a shimmering rock. Her fingers danced lightly on the strings the beginning of an angelic song. So its true, he thought, its really true. She turned her head gently and her soft eyes met with his.

Mark Penrose,
Age: 11
The Harp

Once upon a time in the city of New York, a small American boy, age 12 and a half, was reading a fairy tale about an ancient harp in a haunted forest. This harp was guarded by an ancient Indian girl, that had died 350 years ago. This harp was on the far side of a creek. This creek looked shallow but it's shallowest part was 18 feet deep. It also had something in it, some kind of monster, but it is too hideous to describe.

At this point Kevin put down the book and said "I must find the harp. I know it exists." 2 days later, Kevin set out with just enough food to last him 3 weeks. He was going to Pennsylvania to search for the harp. He searched two days for the forest. When he found it, a cold sweat came over him. When he stepped into the forest, the wind started to blow hard. He looked behind him and saw a strange glow. He started to walk toward it. When he got to the glow it turned into a ghost. It spoke, "Who dares pass the gates of devils forest?" "I Kevin Peir." "You shall die!" said the ghost. Kevin quickly turned and ran, not looking behind him. He stopped and walked for about an hour. When he stopped walking his heart began to pound.

He had found the harp! He thought to himself, " So it's true, It's really true. The harp exists."

He started to swim toward the harp through the creek, when he saw bubbles moving toward him. Kevin just barely got across the creek. He got the harp turned toward the creek, took one step and...SPLASH!!

The water's surface turned blood red.

Kevin never got across the creek with his life.

Greta
Gervasoni,
Age: 8
The Third Floor
Bedroom

A long time ago there was an ancient cottage in which lived a family.

In the morning mum and dad always used to go in the yard to work, And the two children stayed with their grandfather. One afternoon it was raining so the two children played in their bedroom with their grandfather Luciano, who was very clever at the Chinese shadows game.

The two children were fascinated about that game and they tried to learn how to make a bird. At the end of the evening Sandy the little girl was very good at doing this game and looking on the wallpaper her brother and her grandfather noticed that Sandys shadows hands were exactly the same shape as the birds on the wallpaper. While they were looking at the wallpaper Sandy made her birds wings flying and simultaneously one bird on the paper became alive and tried to move its wings. The next day the bird near the empty space on the wallpaper was found by the family with a followed wing. They thought that it tried all night long to follow the missing bird! The magic of that night never came back but it stayed in their mind for ever

**Caitlin
Pickhaver,**

Age: 11

*The Third
Floor Bedroom*

It was a warm night, so I opened the window. I never thought that leaving the window open would lead to what it led to!

The next day when I woke up, I did what I usually did you know get changed, brushed my hair and teeth. I guess I was too tired to shut the window or maybe I just forgot! I don't really remember. When I got home from school that day I realized something was different about my room, but I didn't know what it was. Day's went by and I still couldn't figure out what was the difference. Finally I realized the difference, my wall the birds on it were, well, missing.

Day's went by and the birds kept leaving (although they always left without me seeing.) I never really liked the wallpaper that much anyway. I would shut the window but I'm kind of scared to go over there, what if they attack me. Finally there was only about 13 birds left on the wall. It got cold that night so I had to shut the window or I'd freeze to death. I walked slowly over to the window and I closed it as fast as I could. I turned back around in relief that nothing had happened to me. Huh? I said quietly. All the birds that were missing were now back on my wall. Everything was back to normal again, but now I know never to open that window again

Choose your story analysis task!



Name of writer and story title	How have the captions been used? Beginning middle or end?	How did the writer want you to feel? scared, entertained, saddened? Did they achieve it?	What score would you give them out of 10? Why?

Choose two of the stories. Imagine you are the teacher and they are a pupil in your class. What would you tell them about their work? Include your thoughts about their ideas, choice of words, punctuation and sentence structure. What would you give them as targets for their next piece of work?