

THE BOY WITH THE DARK SECRET.

Chapter 9 Two Mysterious Houses

Two Mysterious Houses

We follow the big car at some distance behind. After three kilometres, it turns right into a secondary road and drives towards Knightscott. Then, they suddenly turn onto a dirt path. There are no buildings around except for one small house at the end of the path. Mrs Randall stops the car near some trees, so nobody can see us. I take a photo of the house on my phone.

Mats and the man enter the house. Then, a different man leaves the house and gets into the car. Is he another criminal? He drives away in a different direction.

"Let's follow the car," I say. "Now we know where Mats lives. Maybe we can discover something else."

"OK, Sally. Let's see where he's going," Mrs Randall replies.

We start to follow the car, but we don't see the curtains move in the house. Somebody is watching us from the window and he's writing down the number of Mrs Randall's car!



We follow the big car for about ten kilometres. We never get close because he mustn't see us. Finally, the car takes a narrow path on the left. We wait for a few minutes and then follow. At the end of the path, we see a big white house. The black car is outside it and we can see people through the window. Mrs Randall stops the car and looks through her binoculars. "Look at the window, Sally," she says. "I think it's Dr Svensson!"



I look through the binoculars and agree. The man looks like the scientist from the newspaper article. Is it Mats' father?

"We can't continue," Mrs Randall says. "It's very dangerous! They'll see us. We must go to the police with this information immediately."

I focus my phone camera on the window of the house and take a photo, but it's very far away and the image isn't clear.

Chapter 10: The Police Take Action



At the police station, Mrs Randall tells Inspector Shaw the story. The policeman listens carefully and makes notes. He looks at my photos and we describe the location of both houses.

"Interpol told us about the Svensson family three months ago," Inspector Shaw says. "Thank you for this very helpful information. We'll take it from here."



There's nothing more for us to do, so we leave the police station.

"It's late. Won't your parents be worried about you, Sally?" asks Mrs Randall.

"Oh no," I explain. "My parents went to the cinema. Only my grandparents are home. They think I'm at Anne's house. I often go there after school and then my dad, or Anne's dad, takes me home."

"Well, let's have a quick pizza, and then I'll take you home," says Mrs Randall.

While we're driving to the pizza place, the police are responding to our information. Inspector Shaw takes his team to the big white house immediately.

First, they break the door and surprise the criminals inside. After arresting them, the policemen take their keys, open the laboratory door and free Dr and Mrs Svensson. They look pale and thin. They're **exhausted** and very worried about their son.



"How is Mats?" they ask, nervously. "Do you know where he is?"

"He's OK, don't worry," Inspector Shaw tells them. "We're going to free him next, but first you both need some medical attention urgently."

Two officers take Dr and Mrs Svensson to hospital, and others take the criminals to the police station.

Inspector Shaw and the rest go to the second house to free Mats. But when they arrive there, the front door is open and there's nobody there! What now?

Chapter 11: Danger!



Mrs Randall and I finish our pizza and it's time to leave. We get into the car and drive home. We don't know that a man in a big black car is watching us.

On the way home, my phone rings. It's Inspector Shaw.

"Sally, where are you and Mrs Randall?" he shouts. "I think somebody saw your car at Mats' house. They know you discovered them and they took Mats to a different place. Be careful, maybe they'll come after you."

I look in the mirror and see a big black car behind us.

"Oh, no!" I shout. "They're following us! What can we do?"



"Go home and lock the door!" the inspector shouted. "We've got your address. We'll be there soon."

Mrs Randall drives fast, but the car stays close behind us.

We stop at my house and run inside. I lock the doors. Grandma is watching TV in the living room.

"Come quickly, Grandma!" I shout. "There's no time to explain, we must hide in the **cellar!**"

Grandma is confused. "What? What are you talking about?"

"No time, Grandma!" I shout. "Come!"

We hurry downstairs and hide in the darkest corner of the room. We're very frightened. How can we defend ourselves? *And where is Grandpa?*

There's no time to look for Grandpa. We hear **footsteps**. Someone is coming! It's the most terrifying moment of our lives! We see some boots on the stairs ... He's going to find us!

The man starts to shout, "I know you're there! Come out, or **I'll shoot!**"

The three of us hold hands. We're trembling with **fear**.





We hear the click of a **gun**, and we know the man will start to shoot around the room. But then, we hear a sudden **blow** and a cry of **pain**. And then silence. I'm very frightened and can't open my eyes.

Suddenly, Grandpa's voice breaks the silence. "What's happening? Who was that horrible man?"

I want to laugh and cry. **What a relief!** Grandpa saved us! He's holding his walking stick in his left hand, but doesn't remember anything. *He's our hero!*

A minute later, the police arrive and find the criminal unconscious on the floor. They **handcuff** him and he opens his eyes. He tells the police that Mats is in the car **boot**, and they free him. It's the end of his long **nightmare**.

"Oh, Mats!" I say. "You'll see your parents soon! The police saved them, and they're having **check-ups** at the hospital. They're fine, and everything's OK now."

The boy is still in trauma! "I thought he was finally going to kill me," he explains. "Sally, I can't believe you saved us all."

"It wasn't me! Grandpa saved us all," I say. "He's the big hero!"

The police take Mats to the hospital for a check-up, too, and then he meets his parents for the first time in three months. The police leave the reunited family alone for a few minutes. There'll be time for questions later.



Chapter 12: A pleasant Surprise (last chapter)



It's a month later and life is slowly returning to normal.

Mats is not at school now. He went home to Sweden with his parents soon after our adventure. We're friends on Facebook, and we chat on WhatsApp, but it's not the same.

The students are presenting their projects today. I did mine alone because Mats left in the middle. I prepared a PowerPoint on Alzheimer's disease and added Mats' information. He sent it to me by e-mail.

Mrs Randall arrives in class with a smile. She's a fantastic teacher and I feel very close to her after our frightening experience together.

We all sit down and she says, "Today, you must present your projects. We'll start with Sally Burton. And she'll present her project with her partner."

"That's impossible, Miss, because my partner was Mats, and he's in Sweden," I say.

"Are you sure?" asks Mrs Randall, with a strange smile.



The door opens and Mats enters the classroom with his father! All the students are surprised, and happy to see him. Now they know his story, they understand why Mats was always a little strange and 'unsociable' at school.



We present our project and Mats' father listens carefully to every word we say. I get an A for the project, and I'm very happy! Then, Dr Svensson explains about his work to slow the advance of Alzheimer's. There isn't an official cure yet, but there is hope. "Finally," he says, "I must thank Sally and Mrs Randall for saving our family. They were heroes and we owe them our lives."

I smile, but I think about the real hero, Grandpa. He saved us, but doesn't remember anything about it! Maybe, one day there'll be a cure to save him, and other lovely people like him. That is my greatest wish.