

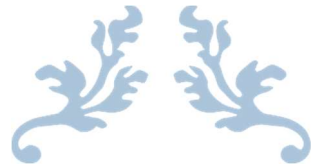
THE COTTAGE



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Sayuni
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BY SAYUNI NAWARATHNE



THE COTTAGE



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Dedication

This book is adoringly dedicated to my loving mother, father, sister , the principal and to my class teacher of Mahamaya Girls' College –
kandy

Preface

The primary goal of the current educational system is to mould a productive citizen and a caring family member who is equipped with knowledge and skills. The main responsibility of the school is to identify and recognize children's talents, as well as to sharpen their skills to meet the needs of the nation and the world.

Our Alma Mater is constantly guiding and assisting children who are creative. This project has been an ongoing process at our school for many years, particularly in terms of writing books. Many skilled and enthusiastic young writers participated in this exercise for years, producing novice writers to field of literature. We regard this as a great victory and a national need at this hour.

To continue this effort, we have adopted digital technologies and an e-book project this year. I am confident that this unique event provided youngsters with valuable experience and challenges that will benefit them in the future.

The Ministry of Education has hailed the project as an important step toward motivating young authors in schools. As principal of Mahamaya Girls' College, I am grateful to all of the students throughout the country who contributed to this endeavor. I commend and applaud all of the young authors of these books for their perseverance and devotion in this difficult task.

I would like to thank our school management committee, employees, parents, for my students, administrators, and teachers from other schools who encouraged students to take part in this worthwhile effort.

Ms Shashikala Senadheera
Principal
Mahamaya Girls College - Kandy
2023 . 11 . 10

The Cottage

It was a gloomy morning. Josh and his sister Lucy just woke up and was being ready to have their breakfast . A couple of minutes later, their Aunt Meg called them to come and eat . So they both went and had peas and fried sausages for their breakfast which were very appetizing. As always, they wanted to go for a walk around their small garden because in the early days they spent together, they found a mysterious wooden cottage under their garden walls. The walls were covered with a special type of graminoids which were only available in a small part of U.S.A.

“I have a feeling that we are going to meet someone who will be one of our worst nightmares. I don’t know brother but I just feel bad about something in this mysterious cottage “ said Lucy while approaching the hidden cottage with her brother.

“calm down sis. I know today feels like a gloomy day but trust me its going to be just fine. Nothing will happen to us dear. Just come with me inside this little cottage. ”said Josh while staring at the cottage.

“ Ok Josh but trust me when I say something . Don’t say I didn’t warn you.” Said Lucy in a little frustration.

After they entered the cottage, both of them were immediately surrounded a colony of bats .Both of them screamed in horror as they both walked further inside. It was Just the beginning of this story..



As they were walking inside the cottage, suddenly Lucy tripped on a stony looking thing and began to bleed a little. Josh rushed to her and helped her to get up. By now, they were both scared to explore more about the hidden cottage but suddenly Josh's eyes were caught on something. Lucy stepped forward to see what it was and to their pleasure, it was a rusted trunk box.

"Oh my god Lucy! I think we are maybe going to be rich. Don't you think so?" told Josh.

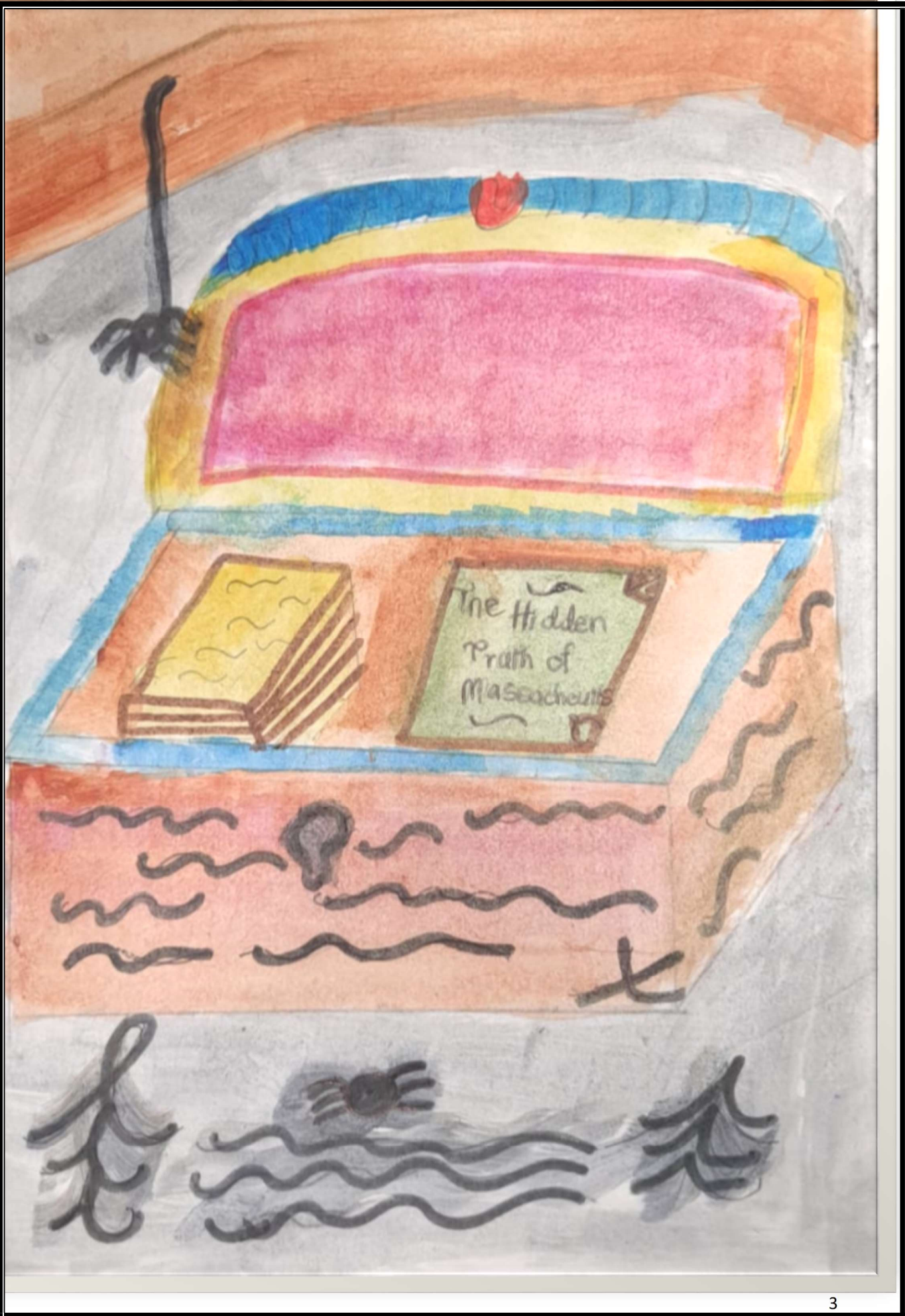
"Are you sure? What if that heavy thing was a ghost's bed?" answered Lucy in a bit of dismay.

"Oh! You mean a vampire's bed? I don't think because it's way smaller for a vampire to fit inside that thing." Said Josh in a relief.

"You are kind of right but I will never touch that stinky thing. If you are not afraid, then go ahead and open it for us to get a look inside of it." told Lucy while giving Josh a nasty look about the trunk box.

Since Josh had a curiosity to open the trunk box, he eventually opened it only to find some bewildering old books and some peculiar letters which were written centuries ago.

"Ha ha.. Where is the money you told that will make us rich?" said Lucy while grinning at Josh.



“I know but I think these junk is worth of somethi...” answered josh but he couldn’t finish his sentence because a strange looking creepy dwarf man appeared right in front of them. Lucy and Josh both screamed at the top of their voices but the dwarf broke the silence.

“Hello kids! I’m Dori. I know I look kind of creepy but I am the guard of this trunk box and this boy over here opened this and now due to that reason I was awakened.” said Dori in a calm voice.

“I’m so sorry, I didn’t mean to open this but may I ask you about what is this?” said Josh.

“ It’s ok dear . You may not believe this but you are royalty because your great great great great great great great grandfather was a king. He ruled his king well and I was appointed as his fortune protector a long time ago. After his death, his things were put inside a trunk box which was happened to be this one but this box only contains his letters and the books which were written by him. I’m an immortal dwarf so I have been chosen by him to protect this supreme trunk box. I will give you a chance to read this things only because the king and you are related if not I already have put you in a curse which was made by the king as a punishment for those who opened this trunk box before.” Said the bizarre dwarf.

Josh and Lucy was in a great shock. They slowly went through King’s stuff and learned about his life. Apparently, the king’s name was Martin the second and he lived in a very luxurious state of U.S.A. called Massachusetts. He was married to a wealthy princess called Luciana and he lived a very happy life with his wife for a very long time.

Furthermore, he suddenly became very ill and his daughter, Carolina, went to England to get some herbal plants which must be fed to the king in order for his survival. Even though Carolina managed to get the endemic plants at the right moment, she wasn't lucky enough to deliver them at the correct time because soon after she left, King Martin died. The letters which were written by him was some letters that were sent between Carolina and him when he was very ill. The books that were written by him were some books that said about the lives of people in Massachusetts at that time. There was a book called 'The hidden truth of Massachusetts' which drew the attention of Josh and Lucy. They couldn't understand the things written inside of it.

"What is this Dori? I have never seen such kind of a book like this. The cover, the texture and the size of the letters they are all different in this book than the others." Said Josh in stupendous mood.

" Well, this book is the most important book in this trunk box . In this book, King Martin has mentioned about an unnatural force which was abundant in his period as for the king, he said that this was a vampire power . In the history, It have been mentioned that King Martin's wife Luciana was hallucinated with a cruel vampire's powers.



Unexpectedly, a very disturbed sound was heard from the attic of the cottage. even the dwarf seemed to have been disturbed from the sound that he went to check up by himself up in the attic. Few minutes later, Dori rushed down the stairs and informed the kids that there was a vampire in the attic. They were shocked that they couldn't even believe their ears .

“ Seriously vampires? Are we going to die?” said Lucy in fear.

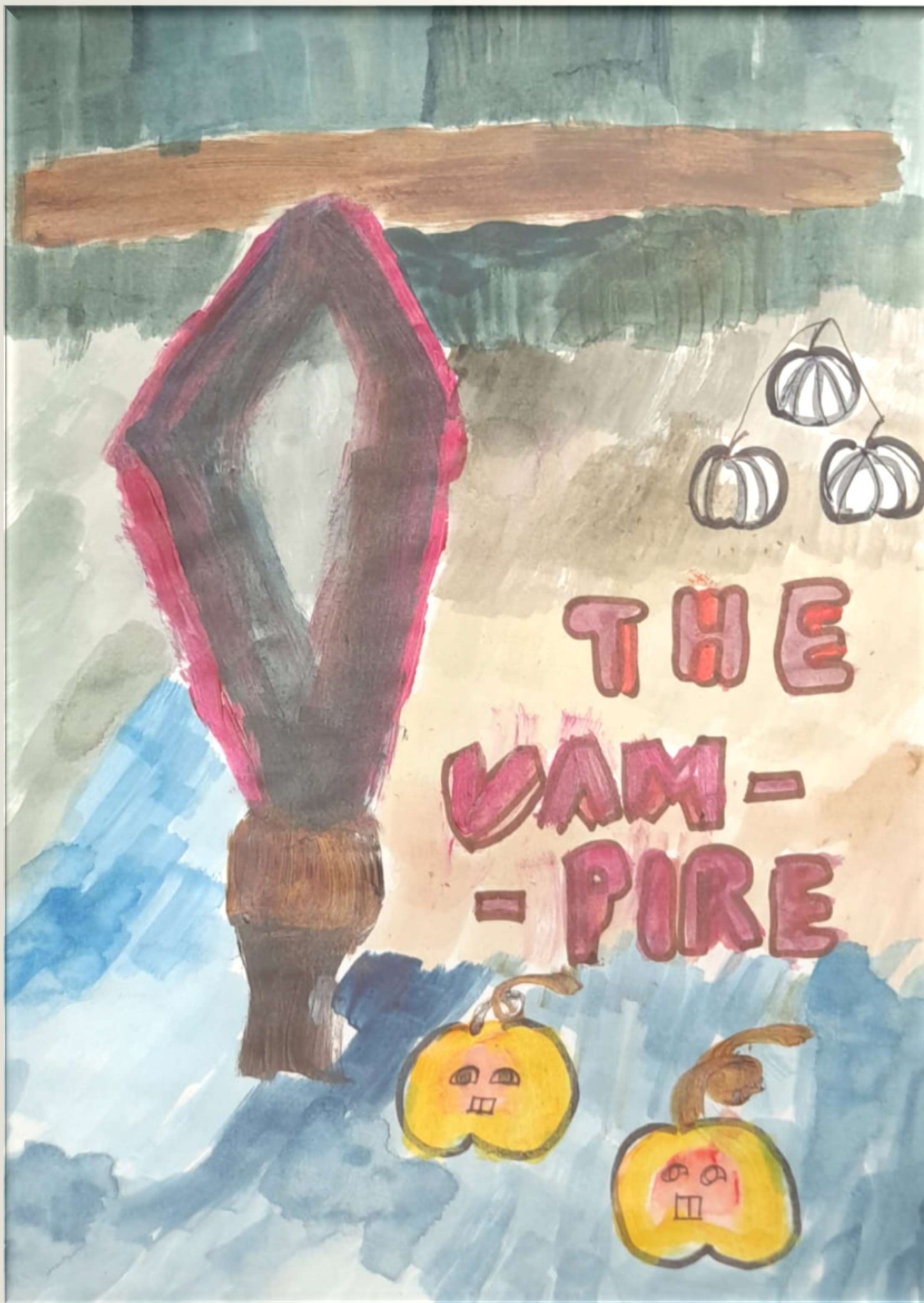
“Don't be scared. Dori will be with us. He will protect us “ answered Josh.

“ Kids ! I don't know how to kill a vampire but I'm kind of sure that maybe in that “hidden truth of Massachusetts” book something which will be useful for us will be there.” Said Dori in dismay.

“ Dori! Dori! In this book, it says that we need to get a wooden stake which should be thrown across the vampire's heart to kill him. Is it true? “Josh called dori nervously.

“I guess so darling. But before that, we should make sure to be careful about ourselves. If not we will be killed by that monster.”Dori answered to innocent Josh.

“Hurry up Josh and Lucy! There is a pile of wooden stakes near the basement of this small cottage. Please can u bring that pile ? I will protect you no matter what happens.”



“For sure.” Both answered sadly and ran to the basement to get the pile of wooden stakes.

After this chaos, Lucy and Josh ran downwards only to find an amazing stack of wooden stakes. They both rushed back upwards and gave them to Dori who later on terminated the vampire.

“Thank you kids for your help on demolishing this cunning vampire. I can’t believe that we were able to kill this moron. I think that was either because he was in sleep or he didn’t hear us coming to kill him. Maybe because he’s oddly kind of old now. Anyway , I didn’t tell you the whole story about this vampire or your parents...” Dori started the conversation.

“ WHAT? OUR PARENTS?” exclaimed Josh and Lucy in disbelief.

“Absolutely yes. Your parents were also very kind like you. After you were born, they visited the attic of this cottage to explore more about it and they unluckily got killed by the vampire. That is why your family didn’t get to know about what really happened to your parents.”Dori answered.

“Couldn’t you protect them like you did to us?” Said Josh in a sad tone.

“Well. I didn’t know that they came the other day. When they died, I vowed to myself saying that I will never ever be careless again.” Exclaimed Dori.

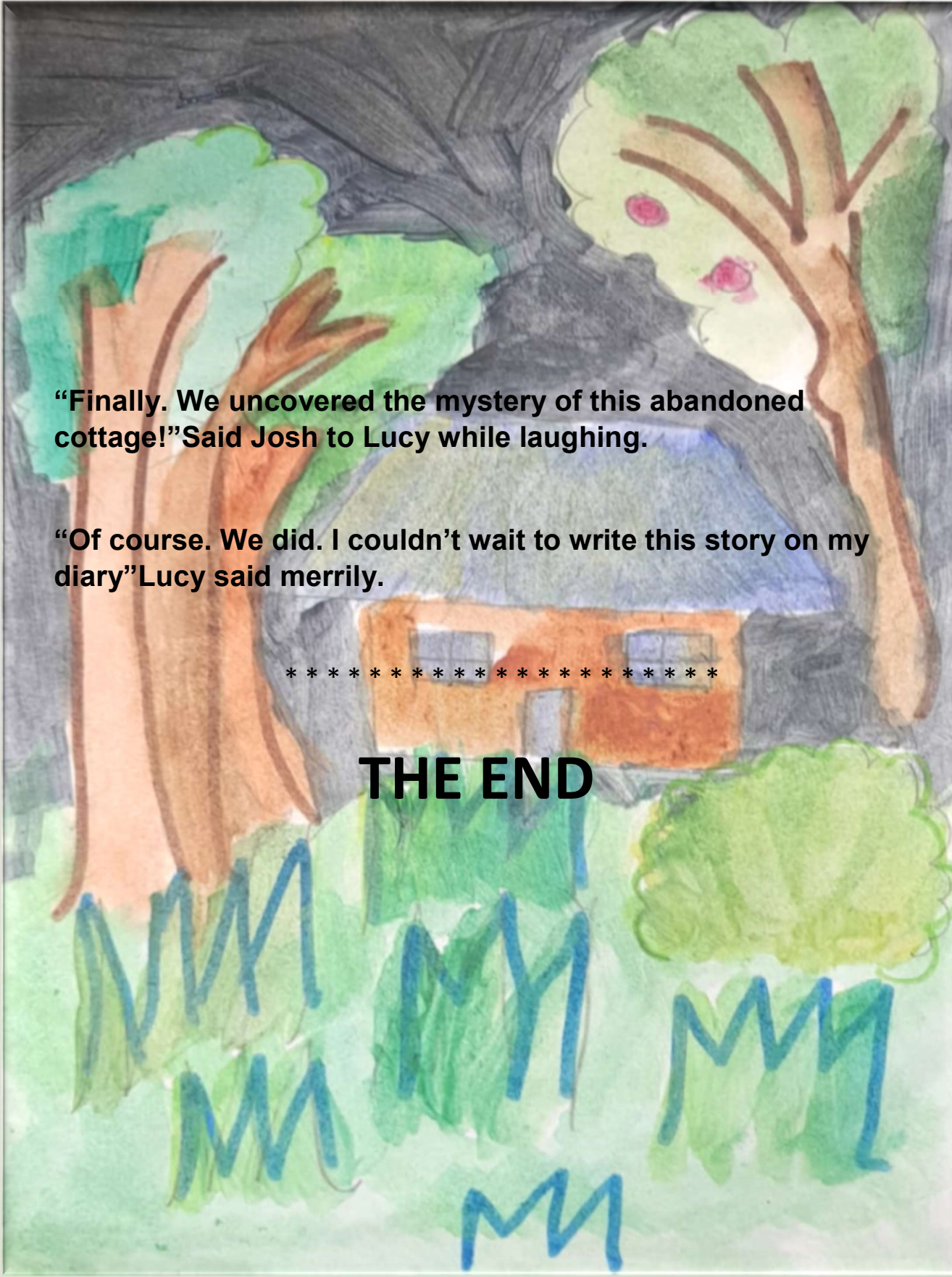
“Who is this Vampire? “said Lucy in a puzzled manner.

“This Is Luciana’s rival. Ever since they became rivals, that vampire finished off Luciana and vowed himself to kill her relations if they came to this cottage and this cottage was Carolina’s play house. This was renovated by me although it looks really ugly right now but that’s okay. Moreover, I have tried my best to protect everyone who comes to this cottage because he is only visible when Carolina’s relations come to this cottage that’s why I was never able to kill him until today. “said Dori in a relaxed manner.

“Thank you Dori for everything. Well, I think its going to be a good bye. But please visit us secretly. We get bored regularly in our Aunt’s house” Lucy said happily.

“Of course I will but don’t tell this story to your aunt. I bet she will freak out.”

“Okay Dori. See you soon “said Josh Joyfully.



“Finally. We uncovered the mystery of this abandoned cottage!”Said Josh to Lucy while laughing.

“Of course. We did. I couldn’t wait to write this story on my diary”Lucy said merrily.

THE END

Afterword



As modern technology permeates the social and economic arenas, students tend to distance themselves from the creative process, relying more and more on technological tools. To reduce this risk and help aspiring young writers produce their own books, I sought and presented a research proposal to the Ministry of Education in 2014. It was a fantastic opportunity for children to showcase their enthusiasm and knowledge. The students of Mahamaya Girls' College achieved a record for the most books written, paving the way for a new level of innovation.

The e-book project will enable the students to reach international readers, and I am confident that they have gained new experiences and challenges that will enable them to face the future with resolve.

I wish all of the young writers the best of luck in their future endeavors

Senevirathna Mahalekm
Founder of Books Publishing Project Among School Children
2023 10 20