



The Secret Lake

Chapter 1 (pages 3 and 4)

Tom's heart still took off every time he entered his first floor bedroom: after his tiny room in their tenth floor Hong King apartment, it really was a dream come true! His ceiling reached high, like a private indoor sky; the narrow French doors, opening onto the tiny sun-filled balcony, stood tall as skyscrapers, and on the far wall a magnificent marble fireplace stood even taller than he was. But, more important than all of these things, was the view. Tom's new room looked out onto a vast rambling garden that stretched as far as the eye could see. The garden, which was shared by all of the house in the square, was filled with cluster of rhododendron bushes and sprawling oak trees whose branches seemed to brush the passing clouds.

Tom pressed his nose hard against the French door window and breathed in deeply, still wondering about Charlie Green. Then, through his clouds of warm breath on the glass, he saw a small dog shoot out from a cluster of trees and race across the lawn towards the houses. Slowly, Tom's mouth widened into a grin. "I DON'T BELIEVE IT, STELL!" he yelled at the top of his voice. "HARRY'S BACK!"

Stella. Who was lying on her bed in her room next door studying her friendship bracelet, didn't answer. With her iPhone music on full volume, she was busy hoping that her friends back in Hong Kong, who would all be asleep now, had thought about her today. She also happened to be crunching her fifth fruit polo of the day – lime green flavour to be precise – the one that always made her ears tingle. "Tom thinks he's in heaven" she had just messaged her best friend, Hannah, on Facebook. 'But it's so deathly dull here – all molehills and boys!"

End of Chapter