

The Multiverse House

By Grace Heinrich, 9 and 11/12 years old

I am Naomi. I am 10 years old. And I have never seen anything like this in my whole life.

It's a house. It is in the center of a glade of trees, and the only way to see it is through a single stone archway. It is old and abandoned, looking like nobody has been in it for a century. You would think other people would notice it but...

Nobody else has ever seen it. Not one person. That is... until my friends Jamie and Yuki were with me, as we were walking home from school.

Jamie was furiously turning a Rubik's cube. "So see... you just solve it... like THIS!" He said, spinning the cube on his finger.

"No way!" Yuki said.

"Way." Jamie said.

"So guys... this is that house I've been talking about. The abandoned one, through this stone archway." I said.

"That house? With the cobwebs and the white-framed window?" Yuki said.

"Really? You can see it too?"

"Yep." Jamie and Yuki both said.

"How 'bout we check it out?" Jamie said.

"Ok. Let's do it."

We all stepped through the archway. Now, I'm not an archway expert, but I know stepping through archways shouldn't tingle. Or make a 'phshew' sound? Well... it did. We walked up the path to the house.

"Hello? Anyone there?" I said, knocking on the door. Nobody answered.

The door mysteriously, maybe even magically, opened anyway and I was greeted by a very surprising sight.

On the inside... It looked nothing like the peeled-paint, bare-wooded, run-down, broken-white-windows abandoned house we all saw. Inside... bookshelves, all across every wall. Many floors, all accessible by spiral staircase. Books floated in the air. A projection board and projector, some cushy beanbags and seats, and a weird bunny-girl sitting in an armchair, reading a book.

The armchair was the kind of armchair you see in your crazy grandparents' house, next to a basket full of postcards from places like, say, a city called Arkansas

City... that is actually in Ohio. It was reddish-brown and tall, making the bunny-girl look even smaller in comparison.

"What... is this place?"

"It's the Multiverse Library." The bunny-girl said, looking up from her book. She was two feet tall and had long ears that came from some cute blonde hair. She was wearing glasses and a cute lab coat. She reminded me vaguely of a character from a book I read before. A hobbit? Yes. A hobbit. But with bunny ears.

"My name is Agnes. I'm a librarian. Who are you?" She said.

"I'm Naomi, and this is Jamie and Yuki."

"Naomi, Jamie, and Yuki, come with me."

Up the steps we went, to a place overlooking the entire library.

"So... what is this place?" Yuki asked.

"It used to be a mansion. Elegant, spacious, roomy, atop this very hill, near Pioneer Park. It belonged to a man named Issac Staples. Long, long ago, when it was torn down, it actually all went into another dimension... the Eternal Spring. In this other dimension, it was converted into a library. A library... of the multiverse. Every book, art, creation... on its shelves. This is where you are... and this dimension is the reason why you can only see it through the archway. You see, the archway is a portal. So now why was it abandoned? Long, long ago, a dangerous character escaped. Everyone fled... but the character, despite loving destroying things and ruling the world... chose to go back. The Multiverse Librarians all went home, and swore to forget what they knew. But many years later, they came back. Their descendants became the next librarians, working in this place. They added more and more, and this is what it has become." Agnes said, in a knowing tone.

That very night, after I went home, I lay awake in bed, tossing and turning. Why were WE the only ones who could see it? Why does Agnes seem like she knows too much?

Why us?

Here I am, laying in bed, thinking of mysteries.

Why are we the only ones who can see it, anyway?

The next day, we went back to the library. It was a crisp, overcast autumn day, leaves falling everywhere. Jamie and Yuki were talking about Deltarune. I've never played Deltarune though so I have no clue what they're saying, but we walked through the archway and knocked on the door yet again.

Questions. They're weird. Amazing. Mysterious? Well... Agnes came to the door in a panic.

"I NEED YOUR HELP." She said frantically.

"What happened? Is there a fire? Is Timmy in the well? What happened?" Yuki said.

"A book went missing. An important one."

"What book?" I said.

"Three books: Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone, Escape From Mr. Lemoncello's Library, and The In-Between."

Jamie looked weirdly... nervous?

"Missing books... interesting. Well... guys, if we find out why we're the only ones who can see it... or *if* we are the only ones who can see it, we'll also solve that." I said

"If? You... are the only ones who can see it. But not really. You're the only ones in this entire town who can see it. The books either fell into the multiverse... or stolen. By one of you." Agnes said.

Jamie looked even more nervous. He seemed to be looking up at the floating books... but he was just frozen. Frozen dead in his tracks, (although he was kind of laying on the floor, kneeling almost sideways, with one hand on the ground,) he was staring terrified. Then he got up and blurted:

"I STOLE THE BOOKS! I KNEW THEY WERE SPECIAL MULTIVERSE BOOKS BUT I JUST WANTED TO READ THEM. I JUST WANTED TO READ SOME BOOKS-"

"It's ok, Jamie, I forgive you." Agnes said, quite relieved.

"It's ok, Jamie. I mean, jeez- this is a library, you can still borrow books. I think. But maybe tell the librarian next time." I said.

"Anyway... uh- so why is it us?" Yuki said, changing the subject.

Just then... the sun peeked through the clouds, illuminating the library in golden light. And Agnes began to answer.

"You all like stories. That's why only you can see it, because you're close friends who really love stories. *Stories can be beautiful. Magical. Amazing. Stories can be about any world, any person, anything. Stories make the world go round. Everyone has a story to tell, maybe even many. Stories float on the wind like leaves, fall from the clouds like rain, and twinkle from the cosmos like stars. Stories can be found in the ground. Or in life. With others, or with yourself. Stories can be found in an adventure on a crisp autumn day, when you're not sure what's in the trees. They can be found in a cozy home, full of dreams and drawings. They can be found in a school, on a playground, with friends. Stories can be found anywhere there's someone to see it, and stories can be told anywhere where there's someone to tell it. And aren't the places where stories are kept, written down on paper... So beautiful?"*

"It really is... it really is. Stories really are beautiful... and so is this library."

The End