

Trapped

Beatrice (age 10) – Class 5B, Wimbledon Chase Primary School

Grandma came to stay. I'd answered the knock; she'd simply stared at me. A long, cold stare. Mum came to the door.

"Phoebe, show Grandma her room," mum said. I led her upstairs.

That night, I couldn't get to sleep. My head was buzzing with thoughts about Grandma. I knew almost nothing about her. She was not close to my mum. How old was she? Had she ever been married? Where did she grow up? I was restless, so I got up to wander. I did that sometimes when I couldn't get to sleep. I tiptoed out of my bedroom and down the stairs. For some reason, as I passed the cellar door, I felt a very strong urge to open it. I pulled on the handle and peered inside. Suddenly, I felt a sharp shove in the small of my back and I tumbled part way down the cellar stairs. I turned around, quick as a wink, and there was Grandma, standing in the door frame!

There was something very different about her: her grey hair was now bright white, her blue eyes had turned black and she had yellowing fangs hanging over her bottom lip. She was holding a wooden club in one hand! I heard a scream.... and realised it was mine! Before I could get up, she lifted the club and whispered, "Hello duck. Don't be scared!" Then everything went black.

When I opened my eyes, I was lying on my back on the cellar floor. I dragged my head up and then struggled to my feet. A sharp pain travelled down my spine. I cautiously touched my head and as I brought my hand down, it was covered in blood. I stared around the room. The usually cluttered cellar was entirely empty, grey, concrete and airless. The door was locked shut. Then it dawned on me; I was trapped.

My thoughts were racing inside my aching head. I started to hunt around the cellar. I ran my hands along the walls. To my surprise I found a piece of paper sticking out of the wall. On it was scribbled: *HCTAH TERCES*. It was mirror writing! I took off the locket around my neck and used the mirror inside to decipher the words: SECRET HATCH! Eyes darting, I spotted a brass handle and as I lunged towards it I heard a menacing whisper: "Hello duck. Don't be scared!" I jumped through the trap door and into blackness!

This time when I opened my eyes the sun was filtering through my bedroom curtains and I was safe in my bed. A dream? I ran downstairs. It was breakfast time. As I was clearing away I heard a knock at the front door. I peered around the curtain and my eyes locked with the bright blue eyes of Grandma.

"Hello duck. Don't be scared," she mouthed through the glass.