

Grandpa's Books

Story By: Andrew Frinkle

Dennis looked at his grandpa's bookshelves. All the walls of the room were filled with mismatched bookshelves, all except for the doorway and a window. The bookshelves were packed with paperbacks and hard covered books, some yellowing with age. It was a rare treat to be let in here. He'd never even been allowed to sit in the armchair in the corner before.

"Have you read all of these?" Dennis asked as he perused the titles.

Grandpa smiled, since he was used to this question. "Most of them, yes. There may be a few here and there that I have overlooked, mostly gifts from people I've not had the time to read."

Dennis turned around slowly, taking in the sights. Motes of dust floated past as he turned as saw all the books. "What are all of them about?"

"Oh, there are a lot of kinds of books." He pointed over to the wall near the window. "Those ones there are reference books. You could learn things about fixing houses or identifying birds and bugs. I like to know a lot of things about nature and how to do things."

Grandpa shuffled over to the left wall. "These ones are all science fiction books, including a few I wrote."

"You wrote books?" Dennis was impressed. He knew grandpa read a lot, but writing too?

Grandpa nodded. "Just things I dabbled with when I was younger and had more time. Then kids and responsibilities crept up on me and took away all that fun time. I had to get serious." He wagged his bushy eyebrows.

"You being serious?" Dennis snickered and then turned to the other wall, to the right. "What are these ones?"

"Fantasy books." Grandpa sighed appreciatively.

"Isn't that almost the same as science fiction, since they're both make-believe?"

"Not really, because science fiction is true to life; it's something that could happen someday. Things in some of the older ones have already come true. They predicted cell phones, space shuttles and all that stuff. Fantasy, on the other hand, is all make-believe, which will never and has never been true. It's great fun to read, though."

Dennis nodded, admiring the dragons and magical-looking covers on the books sitting on the shelves on that wall. He liked that kind of stuff, too. "Can I read one?"

Grandpa smiled and picked one out without even looking for it. "I thought you'd ask, so I'd already chosen one before you came."

Dennis snatched the book eagerly from his grandpa's hands. "I'll start it right now," he said, but his stomach growled. "Or maybe I can start after lunch."

They both grinned, and on the way out, Dennis noticed that there were more bookshelves to either side of the doorway. "What about those books?"

"Those are picture books and alums of my travels and of my family, including a few of you, young man."

Dennis grinned. "I guess I was in here all along, even without getting your permission today, right?"

"In picture form, yes, you were." Grandpa grinned. "I'll let you in more often if you take care of that book and come back and tell me what you think."

"I will. I promise." Dennis replied. Then, they went off to get lunch, talking about books as they went.



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Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. What room is Dennis in?
 - A. a library
 - B. a bedroom
 - C. a kitchen
 - D. a living room

2. Who is accompanying Dennis?
 - A. grandma
 - B. dad
 - C. mom
 - D. grandpa

3. What kind of books is on the left wall?
 - A. fantasy
 - B. picture books
 - C. science fiction
 - D. reference books

4. What kind of books is on either side of the doorway?
 - A. fantasy
 - B. picture books
 - C. science fiction
 - D. reference books

5. What does Dennis promise to do?
 - A. Clean the bookshelves
 - B. Read a book with care and come back to talk about it
 - C. Just read a book
 - D. Bring a new book

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