

CHAPTER TWELVE

...in which, detectives Luna and Astro ask the all-knowing Book Worm for help

“Look, it says here that this book is from the library of the Novakid Magic Academy!” Astro said, pointing to the seal adorning the front of the book, which depicted the Tree of Knowledge.

Astro was holding in his paws the very book with the strange title that could mean anything “How to Do Nothing and Get Everything Done”, which had been found in the room of the missing student.

“It looks strange and not magic at all,” Luna said thoughtfully. “I didn’t know we had books like that at the Academy.”

“I wonder what it’s about,” Astro cautiously opened the book to a random page. The page was blank.

“Maybe it’s a special page to record your achievements,” Luna suggested.

Astro opened the next page, and it was blank again. Another one. And another. They were all blank pages.





"It doesn't look like a book, just a notebook," Luna said.

"Maybe it is. But why does it have a library stamp on it?" Astro asked.

"Yes, that's strange. Let's go to the library and find out what this book is and where it came from," Luna suggested.

"Let's go!" Astro agreed.

And the friends went again to the spacious hall of the Academy library. By day it looked less mysterious. The sunlight streamed freely through large, undraped windows into the hall, penetrating through the gaps between the shelves, and illuminating the slender rows of books. The room was bright, cozy, and serene. They strolled through the hall and found themselves at the index desk. There were two ways to find the right book. The first was to consult the index card catalog, where information about all the books in the library could be found. The second way was to search the electronic catalog. The first way was more reliable, but the second one was faster.

"Let's look through the index card catalog, you can find even the oldest books that haven't been entered into the computer yet there," Luna suggested.

"It would take a long time, and the book itself doesn't look that old. Let's look in the electronic catalog first," said Astro.

"What if it isn't in there?" Luna asked.

"If it's not, we'll look in the index card catalog," Astro suggested confidently.

"Wouldn't it be easier to look in the there from the get go?" Luna insisted.

"There are so many entries for books in the index catalog that you will search all day," Book Worm appeared on the shelf right in front of the two friends.

He was quite large—just about the size of a human hand. His face was small and wrinkled. He had funny round glasses with thick lenses over his eyes, and his short, thick arms were sticking out of his body. He used those arms to turn the pages of a book when he was looking through it for something.

"Who is that?" Luna asked Astro quietly.

"I think it's Mr. Book Worm," Astro whispered in her ear.

"Yes, yes, yes, let me introduce myself: I am the famous Book Worm who lives in books. I know so much about books that I could replace the index card catalog myself. I've read so much that I could replace the entire library," said Book Worm, proudful.

"Oh, that's very good, Mr. Book Worm! We're having a little investigation, and we could use your help at the moment," said Luna.

"Investigation?" Bookworm asked.



"Yes, an investigation!" Luna confirmed.

"Investigation is wonderful!" Book Worm exclaimed enthusiastically. "I know many wonderful books about investigations! The stories about Sherlock Holmes, Hercule Poirot, Miss Marple, and so many others."

"Yes, yes," said Astro. "Luna and I are just like Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson."

He took a magnifying glass out of his waist-bag and looked at Book Worm through it. The wrinkles on Book Worm's body looked huge now.

"Yes... in a way you resemble the detectives," said Book Worm thoughtfully, and then added, "So what do you want to know, little detective students?"



"We have this book," Luna held out the book they found in the room of the missing student, "but there is not a single word in it."

"Well, well," Book Worm took the book with his chubby hands, leafed through it, and then asked the friends, "What makes you think this book is from the library?"

The friends looked at each other, a little confused by the question.

"We thought so," Astro said uncertainly, "because it has the seal of the library on it."

"That's right," Book Worm said, holding up the short, sausage-like index finger on his right hand. They are called bookplates, by the way. This bookplate, however, is not real! It is not made using a seal and ink, but with magical herbs and spells."

"What?!" Luna and Astro exclaimed at once.

