

# The Mystery Bookcase

A fire crackled in the open fireplace, making the modest living room a snug retreat from the rain outside. Across the room sat two men. One of the men, who had short auburn hair, was whispering quietly to the other. As Kitty sat in the corner of the room, she tried desperately to remember where she had seen him before.

Slowly, she walked across the room, through the old, wooden door frame, into the kitchen. She strolled across the room to the banquet table where she helped herself to a piece of chocolate gateaux and filled her glass with lemonade. Carefully, she juggled the glass and plate through the crowd, back towards the study where she would ask the man why he was so familiar.

On entering the room, Kitty noticed that the two men had disappeared. 'That's strange,' she thought to herself, 'I didn't see them in the kitchen.' Confused, she sat back down in the old, leather armchair and began to tuck into the slice of cake.

As she raised the fork to her mouth, she noticed that there was a faint indigo glow surrounding the mammoth bookcase. "I must be seeing things," she muttered to herself quietly, blinking hard to clear her mind. Slowly, she opened them. The light was still there.



Kitty put down her plate and stood up. Cautiously, she walked towards the bookcase. It was ajar. A misty haze was coming from inside the bookcase. Kitty reached out her hand and touched the antique pine. It was freezing cold. She edged nearer and nearer. She couldn't see beyond the bright lights. "Hello," she whispered. No-one answered. Every nerve in her body warned her not to go any further. Closer and closer she moved.

Her body froze. She tried to call for help. She couldn't. Her lips wouldn't move. She started to panic. Where was she going? What was she doing? What if nobody noticed she had gone? She closed her eyes tightly, took a deep intake of breath and edged further in.

Her throat was dry, her tongue thick and heavy in her mouth. She opened her eyes and couldn't believe what she was seeing.

Magnificent trees stood tall and proud, while a blanket of snowdrops danced towards the glittering ground. Kitty shivered. As she steadied her gaze towards the trees in front of her, she noticed that icicles, which were hanging from every branch, glistening like liquid diamonds. Patches of misty light shone through the gaps in the trees with a trail of fresh footprints heading towards the clearing. The hairs on the back of her neck pricked up but her mind was racing with excitement of the unknown. She took a deep breath and followed the footprints.