

THE RIDDLE OF TANGLEWOOD MANOR

Tracey Hawkins

Book to Screen Pitch

SUMMARY

When a family inherit Tanglewood Manor, they imagine a spacious country mansion. Instead, they find a crumbling old ruin with gargoyles, faulty wiring and no toilet.

Following renovations, and adjusting to 'life in the country', the family move in. Sam is delighted, but his little brother, Harry, hates the house and thinks it's spooky. After finding a secret room, the boys investigate and discover a dust-filled library.

One book is unmarked by age and draws them to open it. They read a mysterious riddle, and everything changes. Suddenly, their house is full of the dead people from the portraits on the walls, and those old-fashioned people are very much alive.

Sam and Harry discover they have time-travelled back one hundred years. The riddle book keeps asking them to answer riddles and threatening to keep them trapped in the wrong time.

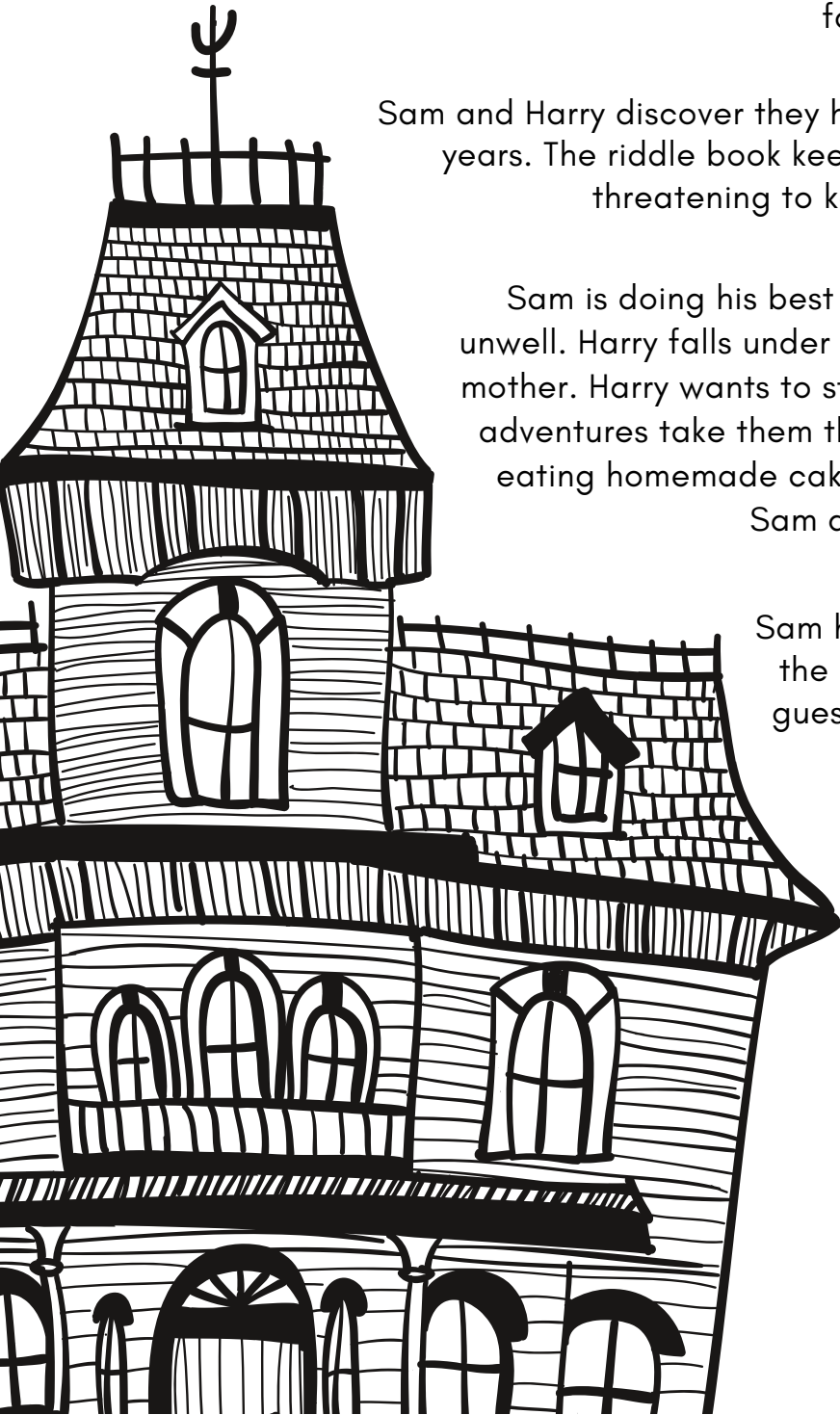
Sam is doing his best to get them home, but he's weak and unwell. Harry falls under the spell of their century-old ethereal mother. Harry wants to stay in the past and evades Sam. Their adventures take them through a hedge maze, climbing trees, eating homemade cakes, and packing for boarding school.

Sam attempts to return them to the future.

Sam has one last riddle to answer. Battling the elements and forces of the Manor, he guesses the answer and finally returns the boys home. Safe.

All is well until, days later, they discover their century-old sister hiding in their treehouse.

A sequel has been written by this award-winning and internationally published author, Tracey Hawkins, and these stories would lend themselves well to a series or feature.



The story resonates with the following films/series:

TITLE

Playing Beatie Bow
Jumanji
Seven Little Australians
My Place

WHY

Australian, historical time travel
The need to solve riddles to return home
Set in similar time period, same challenges
Comparison of historical eras, education potential

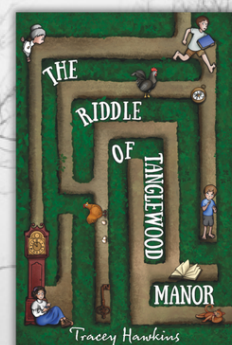
***FIVE KEY STRENGTHS** would make this story a visually appealing and successful screen adaptation including:*

- **Relatable, Compelling Characters:** The brother's relationship is layered with convincing love/annoyance and a deep bonding friendship that holds a power shift twist once they time travel.
- **The Setting:** the riddle book and the manor become protagonists in the story. The story is set in the rural countryside outside of a small town with a population of 1,900. in this era, the boys collect eggs, berries and need to dress in federation-era clothing. There is a gardener, a cook, and household staff. A rooster wakes them daily.
- **Historical Relevance:** the historical timeline of the story reveals comparisons with the past. The boys becoming entwined in conflicts of the past with the end of WWI and the arrival of the Spanish Flu. A snapshot of living conditions, food, resources, clothing, and family life of the time are reflected throughout the story in both eras.
- **Visceral scenes:** the boys' adventures awaken moments of belonging and love and the shift of interdependence.
- **Conflicts/Humour and the Medium of Adventure:** the story is layered with humour, such as plausible roots of experiences of the past conflicting with the known contemporary (such as the long drop toilet, underwear and clothing, the absolute rules to be obeyed by children, and parental relationships).

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