

# Mystery of Locker 103

A blue locker is shown in the center of the cover. It has three horizontal lines above the number 103 and a circular keyhole below it. The locker is set against a dark blue background.

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A NOVEL BY SNEHO ROY

# Acknowledgements

It has been a rigorous effort during the last couple of months to pen down the novella - my first attempt at writing. The book would not have looked so impressive without the support of few people whom I must mention in this column. I convey my heartfelt thanks to my elder sister, Suhaani, for helping me with the illustrations, without which the book would have looked dull. I am indeed grateful to my mother for reading the first draft and providing me with her valuable inputs and views, based on which I could further enrich my story. I express my sincere gratitude to my father for the digital designs and the author photo that make the book appear more attractive. I am eternally indebted to my teachers, especially my English teacher, Manjari Ma'am for her constant guidance and close monitoring at every phase of my writing journey; and my class teacher Padmini Ma'am for believing in us. Their support, affection and encouragement are priceless. Finally, I thank my readers who would read my novella, for their patience and love.

# Prologue

Long, long ago, a pirate named, Captain Hook, had hidden a treasure in the town of Bridworth. Over the years, Captain Hook had accumulated a huge amount of treasure and loot, which he had procured through his several spoils and plunders. He has been saving them as his prized possession for years throughout his several voyages and sea journeys. During one of his robberies, when he was on the verge of being caught, he escaped and hid in the town of Bridworth along with his treasure box.



He lived in the town for few days before he was captured and taken into captivity.

However, the pirate was a smart and clever one. He did not still surrender his loot. He hid it in a safe and secure place. He also did not want the treasure to be found by any ordinary person. He felt that only another smart person like him should have the right to the treasure. So he left clues around the town for anyone worth the treasure to hunt for and discover it.

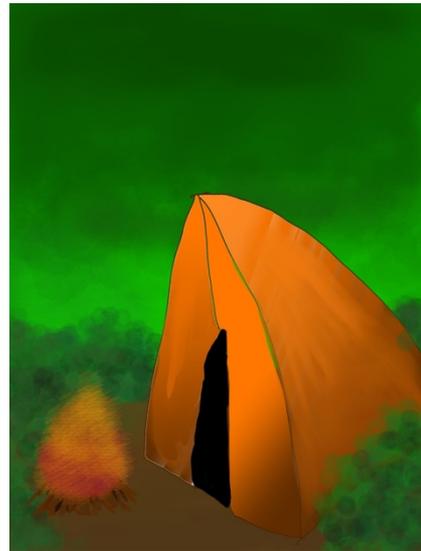
Will this treasure be discovered by anyone? Will there be anyone smart enough to unravel the clues that he has left? The book will reveal the answer to all these questions...

# Chapter-1

## The Camping Plan

On a bright spring morning, fourteen year old Leo went up to his classmate Piper's house for a routine friendly visit that he usually pays on holidays. While the two of them talked about their favourite sports, movies, while munching on a bowl of their favourite snack served by the latter's mother, Jason, their other friend joined them. Very soon the house echoed with the chattering and the laughter of the three children.

All three of them were bosom friends from their early school days. Their friendship grew stronger and deeper with every passing year. They planned every activity together. Thus, even on this particular day, they discussed all their upcoming activities. Apart from the other friendly chat, they also talked about their school Science Fair which was scheduled after the summer vacation.



The kids were genuinely excited about the summer break and discussed at length, how they could spend it. Besides the various common ideas that they had, something exciting struck them. They all agreed to Leo's idea to go for camping that summer. Leo

added, "The trip would also help in figuring out the Captain Hook mystery". Jason and Piper nodded in agreement.

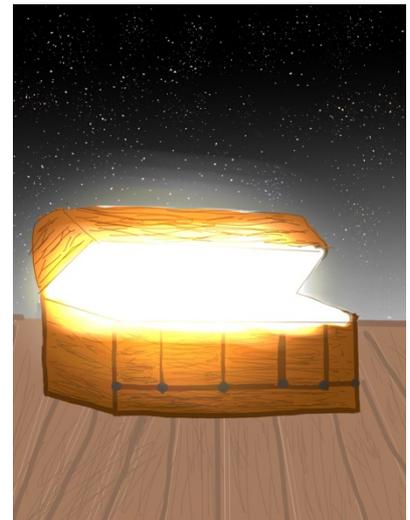
They went home and started packing for the camping trip. The next morning they met up at Jason's house. They were to camp near the lake, on top of the hill between the woods and the river. Very excited, they all started for the campsite.

## Chapter-2

# The Mysterious Box

After a long journey, the three friends reached the campsite. It was a breathtaking sight from above the hill, with the river on one side and the forest on the other. The three friends stood there for some time in amazement. They had never seen the town from so far or from so high. They wondered at the beauty of nature. After admiring the beautiful scenery around, they concentrated on their next task.

They were very thrilled as they set up their tents. It was around three in the afternoon by the time they could settle at the site. Suddenly they realized how hungry and tired they were. They quickly opened a pack of biscuits and started gorging on them. Then they decided to explore the area. So they geared themselves up and started their trek.



As they walked around, they decided that they would also look for some plants for their upcoming school science fair project. After a long search, Jason noticed a unique creeper. All the three friends were very curious. Jason asked his friends to check it out. Jason said, "Guys, I want to check out the roots of this plant". So they dug the soil up, gently and, guess what!! After digging the soil

for some time, they heard the sound of their tools striking against a hard substance. They dug deeper and discovered a small wooden box. All of them were suddenly confused. They stared at each other in bewilderment.

## Chapter-3

# The Message in Morse Code

All three of them looked at the box keenly. "What is this lying here?", Piper said. They debated if they should touch it, hold it or open it. "Is it safe to open this box?", Jason added. However, finally they could not hold their curiosity any longer and decided to take the box out of its earthly home into the open air. All of them crowded around the old, wooden box and leaned over it. Then with bated breath, Leo opened the box.

Perhaps they had expected to find some treasure or some antique items in it; but to their surprise, they found a ballerina doll inside the box. As they held the doll in their hands, it made weird sounds. They tried to figure out if there were some mystery behind it. They checked the doll thoroughly. After fiddling with it for some time, they realized that the doll was conveying something. Initially they felt it was gibberish or some meaningless sounds; but soon they discovered that it was a message coded in morse code. Fortunately, Piper knew little about morse code. She



tried to understand the meaning of what the doll said and she translated it, and this is what it means:

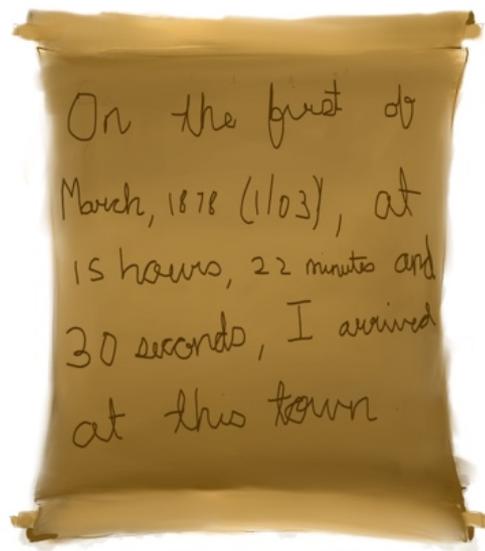
'Big, golden bark,  
Tall and majestic,  
Towering above it,  
A canopy of green.'

All three of them wondered what it could mean. As they started guessing, suddenly Jason screamed, "That just describes the huge oak tree in the centre of the forest." And they were thrilled to have deciphered part of the mystery they were looking for.

# Chapter-4

## The Scroll

They shouted with joy and immediately rushed towards the oak tree. All of them started searching around it. They looked around tree. Suddenly something struck Leo. He climbed the tree and looked frantically. While he looked in between the branches and the trunk of the tree, his friends inspected the ground and the surrounding area. The search went on for some time, till the two on the ground heard Leo mutter something. Both the friends stopped their search and came closer to the tree. They looked up to find their friend holding something in his hand. It was Leo who had found a small scroll in a hole of one of the branches. He brought it down for his friends to have a look at. The scroll looked very old and dusty. It was just the kind of scroll a pirate would have. Jason opened it and this was what was written in it -



"On the 1st of March (1/03) 1878, at 15 hours 22 minutes and 30 seconds, I arrived at this town..."

They noticed that the numbers 1/03, 15, 22 and 30 were circled and bold. All the three friends stared at the scroll. "What could this mean?" "Does this have an inner meaning?" "Can they connect to the numbers on the scroll?" All these questions crowded their minds.

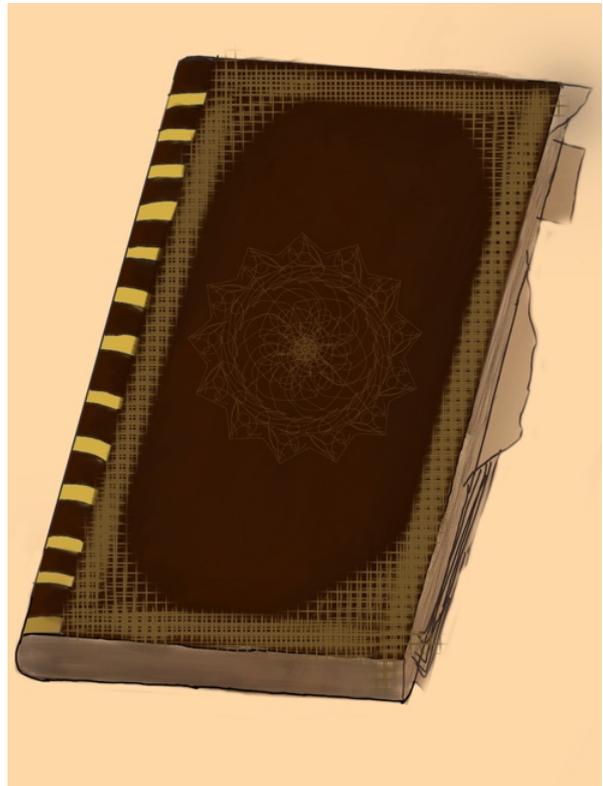
Suddenly, Leo realised something. "Guys!", Leo said, "Have you seen Locker Number 103 at school? So why don't we go to school!" And this is what dawned on all of them. Saying this, they hurried towards school.

# Chapter-5

## The Missing Locker

As they reached school, they tried to hide their excitement and anxiety from their schoolmates. They rushed to explore the school. They did not stop to talk to anyone or be delayed by any questions. They avoided their classmates to stay away from prying eyes. Soon they reached the school locker room. As they moved around in the room, Piper called them. She screamed "Boys, after locker 102, comes locker 104. Where is locker number 103?" So long in school they had not noticed this missing locker.

Suddenly Leo called, and said that he had seen Locker 103 at the end of the hallway. Jason and Piper ran towards the end of the hallway, and they succeeded in tracing Locker 103. However, when they tried to open it, they failed. Leo cried, "I can't figure out the combination". They thought for a while - confused and sad. Suddenly, Piper had an idea. She said, "Could the circled bold faced numbers on the scroll be the combination?" "Well, there is no harm in trying." said Jason.



Leo added grimly, "unless it has some mechanism that if we get it wrong, it will blow up."

So they tried the bold-faced numbers from the scroll, and to their delight, it worked!! And finally, it turns out, that the treasure was a book !!

# Chapter-6

## The Science Fair



All the three friends were confused. They were restless to find what could be in the book that they were led to at the end of their treasure hunt. Without any further delay, the three friends left the school. They ran out of the building and walked in great speed to Jason's house.

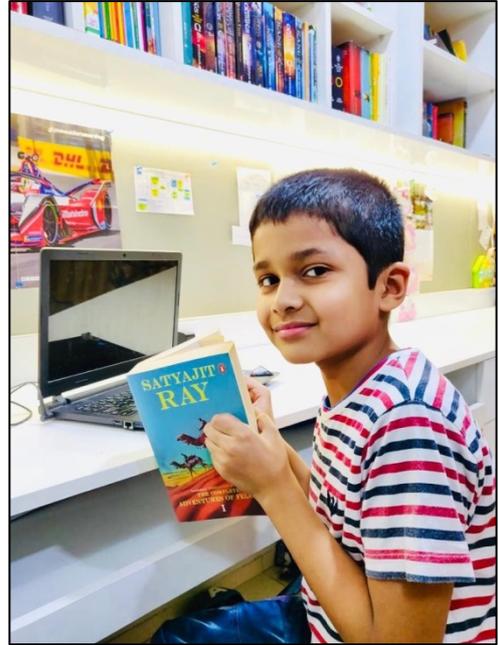
Jason's mother greeted the three as she opened the door for them. But the friends rushed to Jason's room after a quick "Hello". She further asked them what they would like for snacks, to which they replied "Nothing". The lady was naturally surprised at the change in their reactions and responses.

They entered the room and quickly bolted it. They huddled on the bed and sat down to see the contents of the book. Leo flipped through the pages and exclaimed, "There are only science experiments here!" They were little disappointed. However, soon it struck them that they had the Science Fair coming up in school. Suddenly, Piper had an idea. "We can use this for our science fair project!", she cried out in joy.

And there was no limit to their excitement. All of them agreed. They used the ideas in the book for their science fair. On the day of the Science Fair the prizes were announced. Leo, Jason and Piper's team were awarded the first place!!

# About the Author

'Mystery of Locker 103' is the first novel of Sneho Roy. Master Roy has shown keen interest in literature since the age of four. His favourite genre is mystery which is why he chose the same genre to start his writing journey. In addition, he is also interested in mythology and science fiction. Sneho plans to continue amateur writing in the coming days. Besides reading, he spends his free time by participating in outdoor sports and playing the guitar. Sneho lives in Bangalore with his parents and elder sister Suhaani.



# Blurb

The three friends Leo, Jason and Piper set on a camping trip. As they explore and enjoy, they are led to a mysterious hunt. They find something cryptic and are gradually drawn into a quest. Will they be able to decipher the secret? How will the hunt end? Where will the quest take them to and what will they find there? Read the debut novel 'Mystery of Locker 103' by Sneho Roy to know about the thrilling adventure of the trio.

