

The Story Weavers of Bacalen

The Story Snatchers



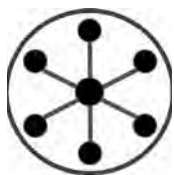
D.I.D Card
The Great Archives of Bacalen

Travellers:		
Destinations:		

A.J. Hill

Junior authors: M.E. Grace & C.Höök





*Protect your books' stories:
a warning to readers from
The Great Archives of Bacalen.*

The words on the spine and title page of this book are written in an ancient script from The Great Archives of Bacalen.

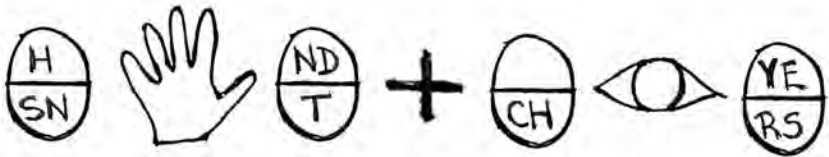
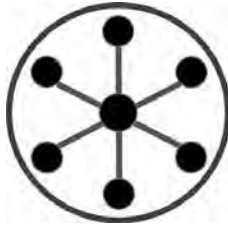
Diegesis Script will protect this story from the steals of Story Snatchers who prowl our world, searching for books so that they can change their stories.

If you are truly a friend of The Great Archives, you can use this script to save other stories from The Snatchers.

Translate your book's title into Diegesis Script, write it on a bookmark or strip of paper and place it between the book's pages each time you have finished reading. The Snatchers can't remove a bookmark touched with Diegesis Script. It will protect the story forever!

To translate a book title into Diegesis Script, you will need to decipher the words woven into the magical bookmarks that the Story Weavers find in this adventure.





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Junior Authors: M.E. Grace and C. Hook

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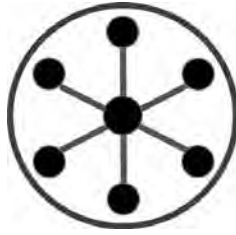
Back Cover photographs: Annabel Bowcher and James Heggie.

Back Cover illustration: Ned 'Elly: the original painting, 'Ned Kelly' by Sidney Nolan resides in The National Gallery of Australia in the capital city of Canberra. The picture has been transformed by The Picture Pinchers (or by Annabel Bowcher!). The important thing is that the author has acknowledged the source and original artist (sadly The Story Snatchers and The Picture Pinchers would not have bothered to do this!).

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The History of Stories

“Stories are everywhere;

And in everything;

In all that we do;

In all that we see.

They are why we learn.

They are why we question.

But,

If stories are lost;

If stories are changed;

Then our lives;

Then our world;

Changes too.”

*(Diegesis, The First Great Storyteller
at The Great Archives of Bacalen)*



Chapter 18:

How will this story end?

Cetus glared at us. For a split-second, we all stood motionless—unable to move or speak.

Meg glared back at him. “Where are my parents? What have you done to them?”

Cetus turned his eyes to Meg and at once, she could tell what he had done. “Let’s just say they are looking a bit stretched out at the moment. I think they are hoping to snatch a bit more time with me soon.”

Meg look horrified. “No!” she cried. Before Cetus knew what was happening, she had pushed past him and raced into the other room with saga pods at the ready.

“It is over Cetus. The Snatchers have gone to the Shredding Basement. There will be no more poaching of stories. No more plagiarising. Let us help you, work with you, to fix your speech-thread. Help you to become Alexis

Craft again.” Spinner spoke to Cetus in a voice that was filled with a mixture of emotions: anger, disappointment, empathy and compassion.

Spinner was amazing! He was ready to forgive Cetus and help him return to The Storytellers. *Extraordinary!* That’s true compassion and forgiveness!

For a moment, Cetus paused. “No, you are wrong Spinner. This is not the only place in the world that The Snatchers are reweaving stories. I don’t want to return to The Great Archives. I want to destroy it. Your precious archives will become nothing but dust. Just like the memory of Alexis Craft.”

He looked at us triumphantly. “We have The Archetypes! Stories are being stolen across the globe! You will not stop the dawning of my new world! I will become the world’s Supreme Storyteller.” Cetus turned quickly and strode toward the tiny door in the other room. He threw a D.I.D. card into it and was gone.

We raced after him.

“Meg, are your parents OK?” I asked, looking at her sitting beside Janet and Andy who were lying on the floor, their eyes closed.

“I don’t know,” she said, tears forming in her blue eyes. “I hope that the saga powder is able to reverse the effects of the transforming ink.”

I saw the stamp that Cetus had managed to put on Janet and Andy. Janet had the black ink on her neck and those dreaded words were across Andy’s forearm, ‘*Property of The Snatchers*’.

Miss Paige crouched beside her sister. She looked anxiously into her face. “You did get them in time,” she said with relief. “They’ll awaken any minute. The ink hasn’t found its way to their life plugs. See, it’s already fading from their skin.”

The inked letters started to twist and change. They formed words that I did not understand – ‘*Property of the Pinchers; Meddlers; Thwarters; Hinderers; Spoilers; and Loathers*’. Finally, for a brief moment, the words were clear, ‘*Property of The Great Archives*’. Then the letters vanished.

Andy and Janet began to open their eyes. They tried to sit up.

“Slowly, go slowly,” advised Spinner, kneeling to help them.

“Cetus,” Andy croaked. He cleared his throat. “He was here. Did you catch him?”

Meg flung her arms around her parents and hugged them tight.

“We’re OK, Meg.” Janet held her daughter tightly. “Cetus was too quick. He arrived with a transforming matrix in both hands and inked us before we could get a mark on him.”

“He got away,” said Meg. “We caught all The Snatchers. There are also plenty of threads to be sent back for reweaving.”

“He has other Reweaving Rooms across the world,” said Caitlin. “The Archetypes must be hidden in one of those rooms. We have failed you, Spinner.”

Spinner looked at us all and said, “Young Weavers, you have certainly not failed me or The Great Archives. Without you we would never have found out that Cetus was leading The Snatchers. We would never have located this Reweaving Room and recovered these story-threads.”

Spinner surveyed the room. He looked pleased to see the piles of recovered story-threads that lay waiting to be extracted.

Miss Paige took The Book from her satchel

and held it out to the Weavers. “And don’t forget this.”

We could just see the tip of the bookmark protruding from The Book.

“The bookmark that you placed inside The Book may also give you clues to where Cetus is hiding,” said Miss Paige.

We stared at the luminescent bookmark. It had a faint blue glow.

“What colour is this bookmark?” asked Spinner.

Even the Great Storyteller could not see the bookmark!

“Blue,” I replied, “a pale blue.”

“So this bookmark fell from a vessel that had a travel story woven into it,” mused Spinner.

“Then I’ll see the image map this time,” said Caitlin excitedly.

“Ready to find out where you are going next, Story Weavers?” Miss Paige asked as she handed The Book to Caitlin.

We all looked at her and replied together, “Absolutely!”

“Travel awaits!” exclaimed Caitlin.

“No stopping us,” said Leo confidently.

“Let’s do it,” Meg added.

“No time like the present,” Bella called.

“As long as we’re together,” responded Anna.

I smiled to myself. We had achieved so much together. I had found my gifts. I had learnt about Story Weavers. I had met extraordinary people at The Great Archives of Bacalen. They were all dyslexic, brave, resilient, imaginative and never lost for words or ideas. We were all part of a very important story that would change the world.

“Ready for adventure,” I cried.

Miss Paige held up a collection of D.I.D. cards. “You’ll be needing these too.”

She handed out some cards and we put them into our satchels.

Miss Paige smiled. “Hope the next chute isn’t...”

“...too dusty!” we said together, laughing.

Janet and Andy smiled. They had fully recovered from the effects of the transforming ink.

“Cetus thinks he has already won but he’ll be no match for us all when we meet again,” Spinner said.

“I think this time Story Weavers, you have taken me on an adventure.” The Book’s words made us laugh again.

Then Caitlin placed the bookmark between the open pages of The Book and carefully shut it.

She closed her eyes tightly and her forehead frowned in concentration.

We watched her face closely.

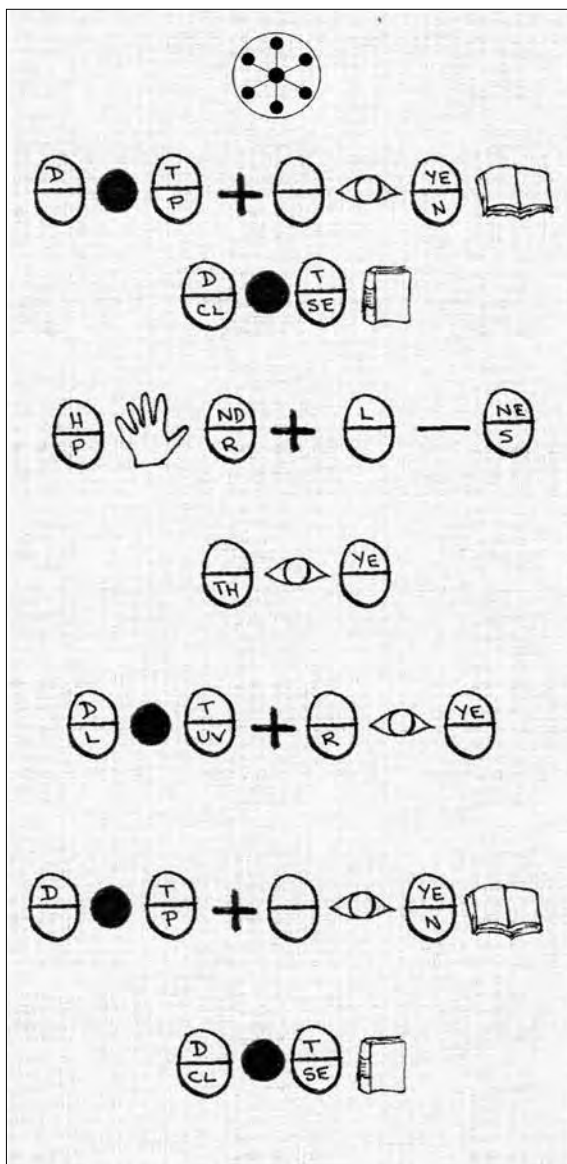
“The images are forming! I can see them!” she exclaimed.

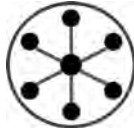
Her brown eyes opened wide for an instant and then quickly closed again.

What was Caitlin seeing? We didn’t have much time! Would we be able to work out where in the world the pictures came from?

Our adventure wasn’t over yet!

What would our next destination be?





Other titles to look out for in The Story Weavers of Bacalen Series:

1. The Story Snatchers

The **Story Weavers** travel to **The Great Archives** to stop **The Story Snatchers** who are poaching stories across the world.

2. The Picture Pinchers

The **Story Weavers** join with **The Great Studio Gallery** to pursue **The Picture Pinchers** who have become allies of **The Story Snatchers**.

3. The Music Meddlers

The **Story Weavers** visit **The Great Music Hall** and learn to manage **The Music Meddlers** who are now helping **The Story Snatchers**.

4. The Theatre Thwarters

The **Story Weavers** travel to **The Great Bacalen Coliseum** to understand how to tackle **The Theatre Thwarters** who are working with **The Story Snatchers**.

5. The Hobby Hinderers

The **Story Weavers** are sent to **The Great Recreation Retreat** to discover how to halt **The Hobby Hinderers** who have joined **The Story Snatchers**.

6. The Sport Spoilers

The **Story Weavers** must work with members of **The Great Sport Stadium** to stall **The Sport Spoilers** who have teamed with **The Story Snatchers**.

7. The Learning Loathers

The **Story Weavers** enter **The Great Knowledge Tree** to understand how to locate **The Learning Loathers** and their friends, **The Story Snatchers**.

8. The Digital Detesters

The **Story Weavers** and their allies are on the verge of creating a more balanced world, filled with creative and imaginative people. Suddenly all digital technology is malfunctioning across the world. The balance is shifting again! **The Digital Detesters** are determined. They want all technology terminated!

We are the Story Weavers of Bacalen—called to save Earth’s stories. If our quest fails then this story will be the last one the world will ever know.

Miss Paige opened the book return chute and threw a small, white card into it. She reached for my hand. “Off we go.”

Go? Where? Air rushed around us.

I heard a noise like an enormous book being slammed shut.

The three of us were INSIDE the chute!

In a blink we landed in a room that I didn’t recognise.

THE GREAT ARCHIVES of BACALEN?

I grabbed Meg’s arm. “You could have warned me!”

Meg smiled. “No fun in that. You’re a Story Weaver now—that’s how we travel the world and find threads.”

But we were children! How could we find all the story-threads that had been stolen by The Story Snatchers?



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