

Chapter 1

In a big green valley, there was a nice little forest. Three homes sat snugly in it.



In the yellow home lived Jake and his family. Jake had two little twin sisters and a spotted dog named Chase.



In the white home lived Ella, her little brother, and her parents. Ella had a little white cat that wore a gold bell.



The other home was empty. No one lived there.

A lonely "For Sale" sign blew in the breeze.

The "For Sale" sign had been there for a long time.





Sadly, no one took care of the empty home.

The yard was full of prickly weeds.

Each window was dirty.

Paint was peeling off the door and the side of the home.

All the shutters were broken.



Jake and Ella were best friends. They often rode their bikes past the empty house.

They loved to explore the forest behind their homes.

They saw squirrels.



They heard birds.



They smelled pine needles and flowers and the fresh, clean dirt.



"Ella!" shouted Jake, who was still looking in the bushes.
"There is something in these bushes—something big and made of wood."

Ella and Jake explored the bushes until they realized what the thing was—another treehouse!

The forest around the homes of Ella and Jake hides some deep mysteries, and these two friends are determined to solve them all. Why are pots of flowers appearing on the porch of the abandoned house nearby? And what is the

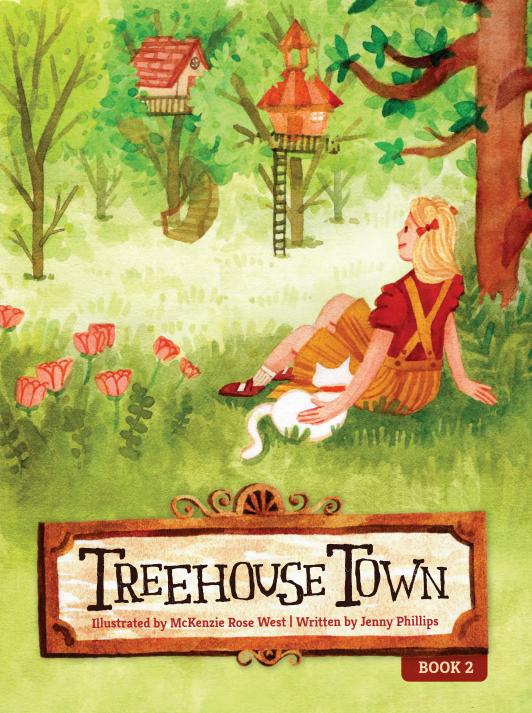
strange light seen in the trees at night? As they search
for answers, the children stumble upon some old,
overgrown treehouses in the woods. This big

discovery leads to learning, friendship, and new adventures in the child-size place that becomes known as "Treehouse Town."











THE GOOD AND THE BEAUTIFUL LIBRARY

Chapter 1

The cold breath of winter hung over the valley. The treehouses were closed for the season, and the woods were still and silent.



Inside Ella's home, however, all was bright and warm.
Ella had asked Jake and the two Ts—Thomas and Tori—over to make plans for two new treehouses to be built in the woods behind their homes—a place they now called Treehouse Town.

The children climbed to the attic and began their meeting.

"Well," started Ella. "We have a schoolhouse, a

bakery, and a flower shop treehouse. What two kinds of treehouses should we build next?"

"What about a post office?" offered Tori.



"Oh!" cried Jake. "I love that plan."

"Me too!" said Ella and Thomas.

"I also think we could make an art museum," said Ella. "We could create the art ourselves."



"Yes!" said Tori as the others nodded.

"Great! Let's get to work making our plans," said Ella.

The four friends sat at a big wooden table and began sketching plans.

After an hour, Jake asked



for more paper.

"I wonder if there is more up here," Ella said as she started looking into some drawers in an old cabinet.

"Look at this!" cried
Ella, pulling out a small
old-looking metal box
from the bottom of a large
drawer.

"It was hidden under an old quilt," said Ella. "It says Charles Miller on it. That's my great-grandfather's name!"

"What's in it?" asked Jake.

"I don't know. It's locked," said Ella. "Let's show my dad."

When the children got downstairs, they saw so many huge flakes of snow



falling outside the window that it looked almost all white.



Ella's dad had just started a blazing, cozy fire. "Well," he said, "I think we are in for quite a storm. The snow just started fifteen minutes ago,

and it has already covered everything."

Ella's dad frowned and looked at the group of children.

"I don't think you'll be going home soon. It's a real blizzard out there."

The children looked at each other with smiles as Ella's dad said, "I phoned your parents and told them we'd keep you until it's safe to go home."



Ella held out the metal box.

"Look Dad! I found this in the attic! It has your grandfather's name on it!"

Ella, Jake, and their friends the "Two Ts" have spent all winter planning plenty of big adventures in Treehouse Town. They hope that a strange locked box from Ella's great-grandfather can finally give them some answers about the curious treehouses. But even if this box holds the answers, Ella and her friends have bigger problems on their hands. Ella's dad has lost his job, and now her family might lose their house—and Treehouse Town along with it! Saving Ella's house and Treehouse Town will require a lot of hard work and creativity, as well as a little help from a mysterious artist.





