

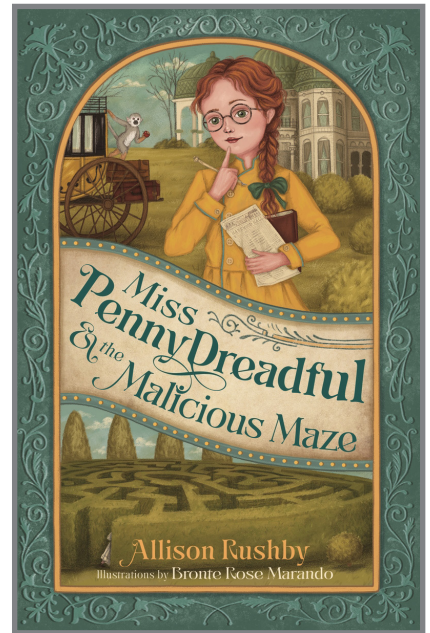
Miss Penny Dreadful & the Malicious Maze

AUTHOR

ALLISON RUSHBY

ILLUSTRATOR

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SCIS: 5445108

ISBN: 9781760654047

RECOMMENDED FOR: Mid Primary

SYNOPSIS

From the moment Penny steps into her family's Hyde Park Square townhouse, she can sense something dreadful has happened. This is confirmed when she discovers her parents' laboratory in terrible disarray. Before she can find out any more, Penny is whisked away with her authoress aunt to Harewood Hall in the countryside, where a malicious maze is rumoured to be gobbling up servants. Miss Penny Dreadful has yet another mystery to solve. And nothing, absolutely nothing, is as it seems!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Allison Rushby, the daughter of an author, was raised on a wholesome and steady diet of classic English literature. Some of her favourite books, re-read countless dog-eared times include Rumer Godden's *The Dolls' House*, Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*, Dodie Smith's *I Capture the Castle* and Noel Streatfeild's Shoes series. She has long been a fan of cities with long, winding histories, wild, overgrown cemeteries, red brick Victorian museums, foxes and ivy. She prefers to write with a cup of Darjeeling tea by her side and a Devon Rex cat curled up in her lap.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Bronte Rose Marando is a Sydney based illustrator. Her whimsical artwork is influenced by our natural world, a love of narrative, the unknown and all things mysterious and magical. When she isn't drawing you can find Bronte with her nose in a good book or wandering about antique stores.

STUDY NOTES

- Before reading the novel, view the cover and title of the book and identify the following:
 - The title of the book
 - The author
 - The publisher
 - The blurb.
- Based on the cover, what do you think this story is about? How do you think it will begin/end? Revisit your answer after reading the story to see if your predictions were correct.
- Discuss the title of the book. Do you think this is a good title? Why or why not? If you were asked to choose an alternative title for the book, what would it be? Remember, a good title should capture the audience's attention and give them some idea of what the book is about.

- The orientation sets the scene, mood and introduces the characters. Which character/s are we introduced to in the opening scene of the novel? What mood is the author setting?
 - Write what you think could happen in the story based on how the writer has set the story up.
- It is the author's job to make it difficult for the characters to achieve their goals. What trouble (complications) does the author create to make it difficult for the main character to achieve their goal/s?
- Can you identify the climax of the story, the moment of highest tension?
- Characterisation is how the characters in a novel are described physically, their point of view, their personalities, their private thoughts and their actions. Create a mindmap of a character in the story with all the words you can think of to describe their character. Then, write a paragraph describing how you imagine the character would be. Compare your ideas of that character with other people in your class. Did you imagine the same person?
- Consider the world the author has created in this novel. Can you describe it? How is it different to the world you live in? Which elements of the world seem realistic, and which seems fantastical?
- How does the story conclude (resolution)?
- Compare the ending of the story with how you imagined it ending at the end of the first chapter. Were you surprised by where the story went?
- Design your own cover for the book with new imagery and a new tagline that will persuade and interest people in reading the book.
- Choose a scene in the novel and rewrite it from the perspective of another character. Focus particularly on the character's attitudes and feelings, rather than simply recounting events. How might another character see and experience events differently to the character in the novel?
- Choose your favourite character from the novel. Draw a picture of how you think they look or find one in a magazine/online.
 - Write a letter from this character to another character in the book. Make sure you use some of the language or expressions that they use in the novel.