

**EXCERPT FROM *The Weird Adventures of the Inman Twins***

“Come on. Let’s see if we can sneak around the house and hear what they’re saying.”

Betty always felt okay about eavesdropping when they played detective. After all, people hardly ever gave clues willingly to eleven, almost twelve-year-olds. If they wanted to know something they had to work for it. That was part of the fun. They never used or repeated anything that wasn’t part of their mystery, so how could there be any harm in what they were doing, she reasoned. Although some of their detective work had almost gotten them into serious trouble, this seemed simple enough: just a sweet old lady and a strange man. She and her sister only wanted to know what made Mrs. Clemens act so different. Who was this man? Where did he come from? Why did they feel worried?

Like mice near a sleeping cat, they slipped quietly around the corner, squeezed between lilies, petunias, daisies and the rough stone wall of the old house. A big lilac bush stood just at the edge of the porch. With gestures, and nods of agreement they crept silently under its limbs, and peeked through the branches at the couple on the swing. They were soon rewarded with conversation not meant for their ears.