


# The Stolen Chapters (Story Thieves)

*By James Riley*

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Owen, Kiel, and Bethany confront secrets, stolen memories, and some very familiar faces in the follow-up to the second book in the *New York Times* bestselling series, The Story Thieves—which was called a “fast-paced, action-packed tale” by *School Library Journal*—from the author of the Half Upon a Time trilogy.

Owen Conners’s whole life changed the day he found out his classmate Bethany was half-fictional, and could take him into any book in the library. Which story would they jump into next? Another fantasy, like the *Kiel Gnomenfoot, Magic Thief* books? Maybe something with superheroes? Owen’s up for anything except mysteries—those just have too many hidden clues, twists that make no sense, and an ending you never see coming.

Then Owen wakes up in a real-life mystery with a memory that’s been erased and too many questions. How did Kiel Gnomenfoot lose all of his magic? Where is Bethany? And who’s the annoying guy wearing the question mark mask and Sherlock Holmes hat, taunting Owen and Kiel that Bethany is in grave danger?

Bethany is trapped in a hidden room that’s slowly filling with water, and she can’t escape until her friends find her. But is she imprisoned by more than just chains and a locked door? What’s she hiding from Owen and Kiel?

Maybe some mysteries just shouldn’t be solved…

**Please note: The black bars in the first nine chapters are intended.**

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## Editorial Review

From School Library Journal
Gr 4–6—The second installment of the series, in which regular kid Owen meets Bethany, a half-fictional girl who can travel into and out of books, starts out with a bang and an explosion. Owen and Kiel, who's a fictional character from Owen's favorite series, wake up inside of a mystery—Owen's least favorite genre. Bethany is nowhere to be found, though a strange kid in a Sherlock Holmes hat claims that she is in great danger if Owen and Kiel can't figure out the mystery of where she is and why. Unfortunately, the pair face several problems: Kiel has lost his magical powers, the mysterious kid has blown up the library, the police are after Owen, and neither of them can remember anything that happened before they woke up. Owen has to face his worst fears and courageously save his friends in this lively sequel that will keep even the most reluctant readers on the edge of their seats. VERDICT A must-buy where there are fans of the first book.—Terry Ann Lawler, Burton Barr Library, Phoenix

About the Author
James Riley lives in Virginia. He is the author of *Half Upon a Time*, *Twice Upon a Time*, and *Once Upon the End* as well as the Story Thieves series.

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The Stolen Chapters

# CHAPTER 10

Someone was trying to steal Owen’s life, and there was nothing Owen could do about it.

“Your life is mine now,” said the story thief, a brown-haired boy wearing the exact same T-shirt, the exact same jeans, and the exact same face as Owen.

“No!” Owen tried to shout, but he couldn’t move or talk. His body just wouldn’t respond.

The duplicate leaned in, hands reaching out for Owen . . .

And that’s when Owen woke up with a start.

Wait, he’d been asleep! It was just a dream! A scary, sweaty, awful dream.

Owen wanted to laugh. “It was all a dream” was the worst possible ending to any story, but right now, it definitely felt comforting. It had felt much too real, though he supposed that was dreams for you. Owen ran his hands over his sheets, happy to still be in bed.

Except his sheets felt a lot like carpet, and he wasn’t lying on a pillow.

Also, his carpet-feeling sheets were orange for some reason.

“Uh?” Owen said. He picked his head up a bit from the carpet, only to wince and drop his head back to the floor, squeezing his eyes shut. A huge ache pounded through his temples, and everything smelled weirdly

smoky.

He tried opening his eyes again, but even the little bit of light in the room caused his headache to scream at him. But Owen knew that orange carpet. He knew it like the back of his hand. Which, admittedly, he didn't know all that well, but still.

This was the library. He was facedown on the floor of his mother's library.

And he had no idea how he'd gotten here.

Gathering all of his courage, Owen opened his eyes again to look around.

"Owen?" said a voice to his side, followed by a painful groan.

"Kiel?" Owen said, and groaned too as he turned slightly to face the direction the voice had come from.

Kiel Gnomenfoot, former boy magician and hero to millions as star of his own book series, looked like he wanted to burst into tears. "Owen," Kiel repeated, as if the word tasted bad. "Why . . . head . . . hurt?"

Owen tried to bring up a word or two, something along the lines of I have no idea, but it's obviously for evil, evil reasons, but all he managed to croak out was, "Unnh." Figuring that wasn't enough, he slapped his hand a few times on the floor, then cringed at the noise.

How had he and Kiel gotten to his mom's library? The last thing Owen remembered was . . . wait, what was the last thing he remembered? It was like everything in the recent past was just gone. He remembered Kiel being introduced to their class as Kyle, a new student, but that was the last thing. How long ago had that been? And why couldn't he remember anything else?

Thunder crashed, and Owen grabbed his head as it erupted in pain, which made him face-plant onto the floor. After a moment of pure agony, something more urgent than the ache seeped through his brain.

"Do you smell smoke?" he asked Kiel. Owen pushed himself up and over onto his back, so at least he wouldn't hit his face again if he fell.

"Probably," Kiel moaned from his side. "Is something on fire?"

Dark black smoke began to curl into sight above Owen on the library's ceiling, and in spite of the pain, Owen immediately sat up. "Kiel!" he shouted. "The library's on fire!"

"No yelling!" Kiel shouted back, and they both groaned. Kiel slowly pushed himself up too and looked around. "Oh. Fire. That's not a good thing. Hold on, I'll use . . . whatever it is I do. Magic. To put it out."

"Holding," Owen said, gritting his teeth and waiting. "Hurry. Hurty."

A pause, and then Kiel gasped. "They're not there!"

"What aren't?"

"My wand-knives!" he said, then paused. "Owen, I can't remember any magic, and my spell book's gone

too. I can’t do magic without it or my wands.”

“A brilliant observation,” said a too-deep, fake-sounding voice from behind them, as if someone was talking into a voice changer. “Which begs the question, what exactly can you do, Mr. Gnomenfoot? What use are you without your magic?”

Owen turned to find himself staring at a short figure wearing a brown overcoat, a Sherlock Holmes hat, and a white mask with a black question mark where the face should have been.

Well. That wasn’t good.

“Gentlemen,” the masked figure said, crossing his arms over his chest. “I would say the game is afoot, but unfortunately, your game is already over.”

## Users Review

**From reader reviews:**

**Marie Heidelberg:**

In this 21st century, people become competitive in every single way. By being competitive today, people have do something to make these survives, being in the middle of often the crowded place and notice by surrounding. One thing that sometimes many people have underestimated this for a while is reading. Yep, by reading a e-book your ability to survive increase then having chance to remain than other is high. For you who want to start reading some sort of book, we give you this kind of The Stolen Chapters (Story Thieves) book as basic and daily reading reserve. Why, because this book is usually more than just a book.

**Lenora Dryer:**

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**Helen Price:**

Reading a book to become new life style in this 12 months; every people loves to read a book. When you examine a book you can get a wide range of benefit. When you read ebooks, you can improve your knowledge, due to the fact book has a lot of information into it. The information that you will get depend on what kinds of book that you have read. If you need to get information about your examine, you can read education books, but if you want to entertain yourself you can read a fiction books, such us novel, comics, in addition to soon. The The Stolen Chapters (Story Thieves) will give you new experience in studying a book.

**Karen Delamora:**

What is your hobby? Have you heard which question when you got scholars? We believe that that query was given by teacher with their students. Many kinds of hobby, Everyone has different hobby. So you know that little person similar to reading or as looking at become their hobby. You need to know that reading is very important along with book as to be the issue. Book is important thing to include you knowledge, except your teacher or lecturer. You get good news or update with regards to something by book. Amount types of books that can you take to be your object. One of them is actually The Stolen Chapters (Story Thieves).


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