



Martin Truemartin

L. D. Rafey

CreateSpace

Unknown (pp)

978-1-4537-5069-8

There was something about the ancient relic that was strangely attractive to Martin. Leaning closer...to test the texture of the black stones, Martin sensed an odd tingling at the tips of his fingers. Then, suddenly, he experienced a jolt, like a shot of electricity...

Thirteen-year-old Martin Truemartin displays an incredible artistic talent and a dismal lack of self-confidence. As he struggles with school, he becomes more and more unhappy. His frustrated parents send him to his grandparents for a year as a last refuge to turn his life around.

As the train takes Martin to his new home, strange happenings begin. The other passengers disappear, Martin arrives at Dejermaine instead of Legermain, and an uncommunicative chauffeur meets him at the station and drives him to an old castle where he is immediately put to work in the kitchen.

Martin's life is about to change. As he lives and works with the sundry characters who inhabit the castle, he learns the history and legend of the Dejermaine family. The legend centers around lovers Jaridameen and Kazlynn, Kazlynn's beloved honey bee Felix, a blood-red rose, a family heirloom and Jaridameen's brother Arttus.

In this tale of good and evil, Martin discovers life lessons as he finds the missing pieces to the family legend. To solve the puzzle, he must confront the evil that lurks within. As blackbirds take over the castle grounds, he learns about the family curse from O-John, the young heir to the Dejermaine legacy, and Dreama, the girl who awakens his heart.

The story is filled with charming, sometimes eccentric, and alas, even purely evil characters. Dejermaine Castle's history must be understood and its secrets unraveled to break the family curse. Martin maneuvers through his rise from the lowest kitchen position to the castle artist when he accepts the challenge to capture the family history in a mural for the grand dining room. As he searches for inspiration, he faces his own weaknesses and imperfections. As his feelings for Dreama grow, he recognizes that he alone is responsible for his actions.

Along with a well-developed cast of characters, the appealing setting and smoothly developed plot combine to enhance the reader's experience. While the story entertains at surface level, it lends itself to a deeper exploration of character development.

Author L. D. Rafey is a doctor who loves history, mythology and art. In addition to practicing medicine, he writes children's fiction and poetry.

In this delightful tale, Rafey gives readers a story that encompasses adventure, ancient curses, friendship, love and a search for truth. Although initially Martin's charm lies in his humility, as he matures and gains self-confidence, his appeal grows larger in his open, trusting and caring personality.

PAT MCGRATH AVERY (July 5, 2011)

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