

## **Cynthia's Attic: The Magician's Castle :**

Sebastien the Great, a magician whose fiancée, Kathryn, disappears through the magic trunk, vows revenge. If Cynthia and Gus don't find a missing page from the "Book of Spells," Cynthia's family could face financial and personal ruin.

Follow this time-traveling duo as they journey back to a 1914 Swiss castle where Eva, Sebastien's grandmother, gives them clues on where to begin their search. Their journey takes them through miles of tree tunnels, an enchanted garden ruled by a cranky rock monster, and even high in the Alps. They get the surprise of their lives when they're sent 50 years into the future, have a shocking encounter with another set of best friends, and receive a fresh set of clues that could lead to Kathryn's return. But, at what price?

### **Author Book Blurbs**

"...scary, funny and mysterious all at the same time...awesome!" *Kelsey Smith*, winner, C.S.I. Young Authors Award

"A captivating story of friendship and adventure told through time travel and magic, Gus, our heroine, navigates the past and the present with treasures lost and found." - Kerry Madden, author of *Gentle's Holler*, *Louisiana Song*, *Jessie's Mountain*, *Up Close: Harper Lee*

"This wonderfully imaginative tale will delight readers. I wish I had a magic attic!" - *Laura Schaefer*, author of *The Teashop Girls*

"Everyone will love this intriguing story of time travel. It left me wanting more!" *Bobbie Hinman* - Author of *The Knot Fairy*, *The Sock Fairy* and *The Belly Button Fairy*

I heard the nearby sound of running water. My back pressed against the cool, damp walls of a cave, but I saw welcoming light through the entrance leading, not to the castle basement, but to the outside. The cave was small and ordinary except for a rippling stream I followed into the sunlight of a steamy, cloudless day.

### **Excerpt: Chapter Nine**

"What the..." I stared in disbelief at my hometown fairground with the biggest, noisiest carnival spread in all directions! Moving from the cave, I jumped over the three-foot wide spring that meandered away from the Midway. This fair was nothing like the one from last year. The old merry-go-round was gone. In its place was one double the size with brightly painted horses

and vivid landscape scenes circling inside. Huge colored mirrors reflected the sun as laughing riders urged their ponies faster and faster.

That wasn't the only difference. A monster, three-story ride resembling a huge insect thrashed in the distance, arms flailing in all directions.

"Hey kid. Wanna ride?" A carnival worker motioned toward a giant, swinging pirate ship. I got queasy just looking at it!

"Huh? Uh...not now, thanks."

"If you do, then you better get your hand stamped."

"My hand stamped? Why?" *What happened to buying tickets?*

"You gotta pay to get your hand stamped before you can ride anything. See that booth over there? Give 'em twenty bucks and they'll stamp your hand."

"Twenty dollars? Are you crazy? These rides only cost a dime."

"A dime?" The guy laughed so hard he almost choked. "Where you been livin'...under a rock?" He walked back to the gate chuckling to himself. "A dime! That's a good 'un."

"Twenty dollars? Who are they kidding?" I continued down the midway to the concessions. *Now, here's something I can relate to. Funnel cakes! Yum.* I dug in my pocket for some change. Surely I had at least a quarter. *Uh-oh. I'll need more than that.*

*Funnel Cakes - \$3.50*

"What is going on?" I studied prices posted on other booths. Corn dogs: \$4.00. Lemonade: \$2.50. Cotton Candy: "What? \$3.00?" Food was ten times what I remembered. Same as the rides. Then I noticed the crowd. Girls dressed in short, denim skirts and what looked like...pajama tops! Others in jeans that had holes all over them! I could just imagine my mother's face if I went out of the house dressed like that.

"Hey, watch where you're going!"

"Uh, sorry."

A tall girl with short, black, purple-streaked hair sticking out in all directions and grape-colored lipstick poked me in the shoulder with a multi-ringed index finger.

"Chill, Leez, she's just a kid."

*Who's she calling a kid? I'll be thirteen...in six months!*

"I'm just messin' with her, Niki. Next time, watch where you're going." Leez gave me a fake, purple smile. "Did Mama dress you?"

These girls were making me uncomfortably aware of my stiff blue jeans, white sneakers, freckled face, and tomboy haircut. They were probably close to my age, but their makeup,

clothes and jewelry made *me* look like my six-year-old cousin, Sally. *Where was I?* More important. *When was I?*

### **Things you might not know about me!**

1. *Why do you write young reader fantasy/fiction? What drew you to write that type of book?*

I love thinking back to the carefree days of my childhood. *Cynthia's Attic* was written with an overwhelming desire to relive and relate the joy and innocence of growing up in Southern Indiana. My dad nurtured my love of fantasy. If he wasn't reading a bedtime story, he was making up one of his own. He was a journalist for almost forty years and an amazing writer. I'm also interested in genealogy, so it was quite natural to combine fantasy and history.

2. *Tell us a little about yourself. How long have you been writing?*

I live in the beautiful mountains of West Georgia with my husband. We're the parents of three grown children, and have a sixteen-year-old granddaughter. I've been writing most of my life. I began writing poetry (not good!) then moved on to memoirs. I also have a co-written, humorous lifestyle book titled, "WOOF" (Women Only Over Fifty) DEC 2008.

When I'm not chained to my computer, I enjoy playing golf, swimming, taking walks, and *pi routin*. Not sure that's spelled right, but it's Cajun for *wandering about*, taking in the sights without a specific itinerary.

3. *What kind of writing rituals do you have? Do you schedule time, when the mood strikes?*

I wake up and have coffee. Turn on my computer. Have another cup of coffee. Open my e-mails. Hit delete 75 times, or so. Have another cup of coffee...well, you get the idea. I try to write every day. I don't like to force it, though. If the words aren't flowing, I do something else and then go back to it. I love writing when my brain is working so fast, my fingers can barely keep up. I guess my only ritual is that (oh, this is going to

sound really weird) I must have my shower and be dressed before I can write. I have a friend who writes in her jammies. Not me! Don't get me wrong. I don't have to be in black dress slacks and white cashmere sweater! Jeans and a T-Shirt will do quite nicely. Just so I'm dressed.

4. *Tell us something about you that's NOT in your author bio.*

I'm a sports fanatic. In fact, if one of my husband's friends has a sports trivia question, he refers them to me. My dad not only instilled my love of writing, he also gave me a passion for sports. One of my favorite short stories, *Ghost Light*, is about Jake, an 11-year-old Hoosier growing up in a basketball loving family. The biggest problem for Jake? He's short and fears he'll never live up to his Grandpa Max who was a star on the high school basketball team until he gets an unexpected *visit* from his grandmother. Echelon Press published ghost light as an e-book.

I'm also a huge NASCAR fan! Love watching drivers make all those left-hand turns! I also enjoy pro football and watching the *Tiger Woods Golf Tour* (also known as the PGA!).

**Bio - Mary Cunningham:**

Mary Cunningham is the author of the award-winning Tween fantasy/mystery series, *Cynthia's Attic*. She is proud to announce book four, "The Magician's Castle," is due for release in December, 2009. Her children's mystery series was inspired by a recurring dream about a mysterious attic. After realizing that the dream took place in the home of her childhood friend, Cynthia, the dreams stopped and the writing began.

She is also co-writer of the humor-filled lifestyle book titled, "Women Only Over Fifty (WOOF)," along with a published short story, "Ghost Light."

Cunningham is a member of SCBWI (Southern Breeze Chapter), The Georgia Reading Association, and the Carrollton Creative Writers Club. When she gives her fingers a day away from the keyboard, she enjoys golf, swimming and exploring the mountains of West Georgia where she makes her home with her husband. Together they've raised three creative children and enjoy spending time with their granddaughter.

[Quake](#) (Echelon Imprint) (*The Magician's Castle* is available to preorder)

[Amazon](#)

[Fictionwise](#)

[Ghost Light](#) (Kindle)

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[www.marycunninghambooks.com](http://www.marycunninghambooks.com)