

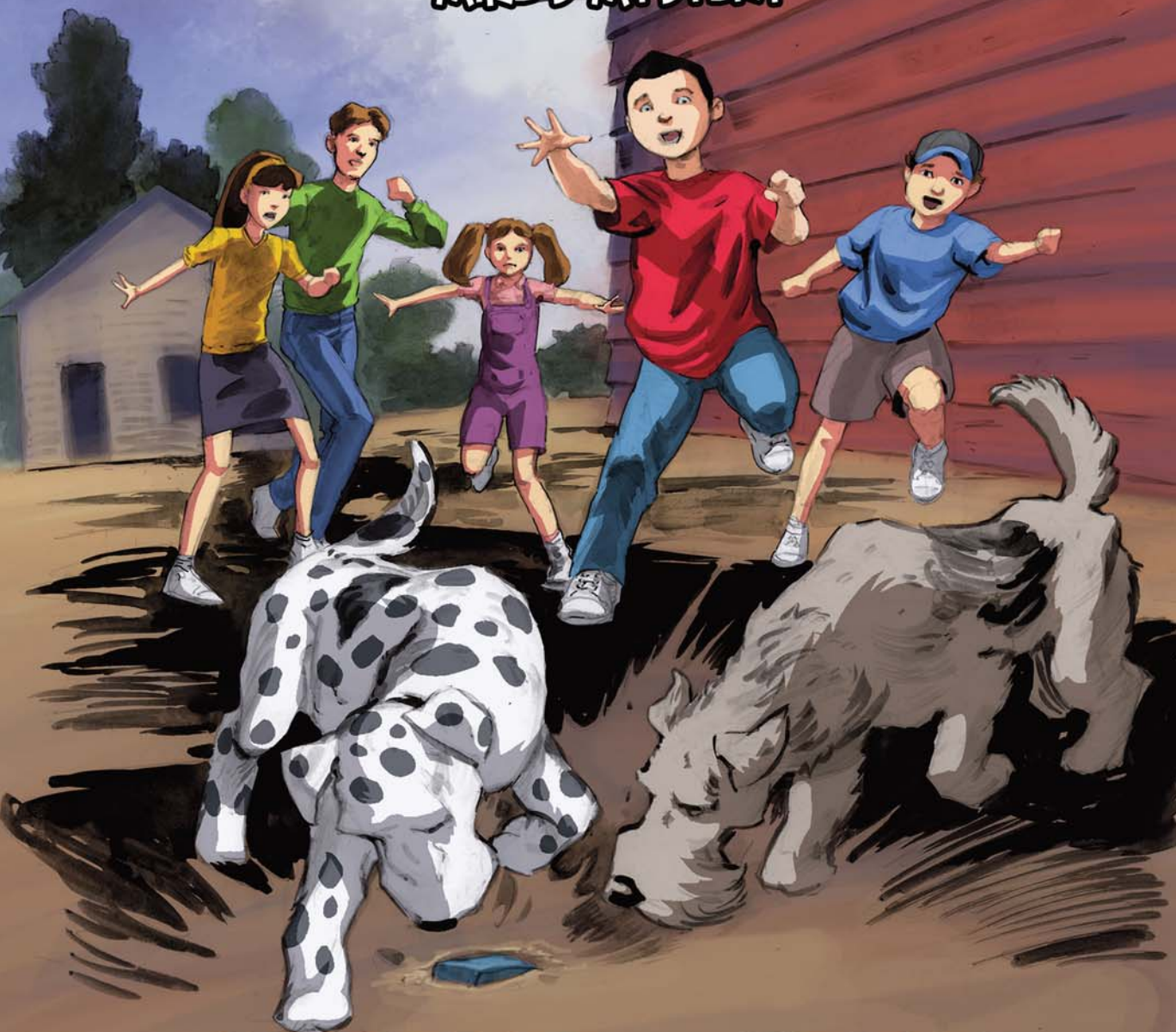
THE

Gertrude Chandler Warner's

BOXCAR CHILDREN

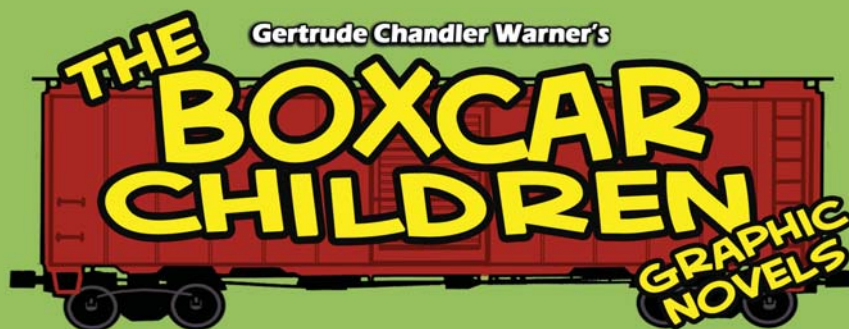
**GRAPHIC
NOVELS**

MIKE'S MYSTERY



Christopher E. Long

Mike Dubisch



BOOK FIVE MIKE'S MYSTERY

Henry, Jessie, Violet, and Benny are on summer trip out West, and they're thrilled to find their friend Mike Wood lives in the bustling new town near Mystery Ranch.

But one night a house burns down, and young Mike is blamed for starting the fire! The Boxcar Children know he didn't do it. Can they help their friend?

THE BOXCAR CHILDREN

GRAPHIC NOVELS

1. THE BOXCAR CHILDREN
2. SURPRISE ISLAND
3. THE YELLOW HOUSE MYSTERY
4. MYSTERY RANCH
5. MIKE'S MYSTERY
6. BLUE BAY MYSTERY

Gertrude Chandler Warner's

THE BOXCAR CHILDREN

MIKE'S MYSTERY

Adapted by Christopher E. Long
Illustrated by Mike Dubisch



Henry Alden



Jessie Alden



Watch



Violet Alden



Benny Alden



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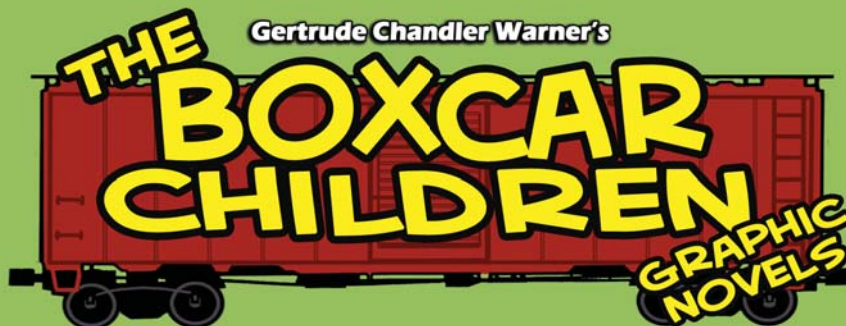
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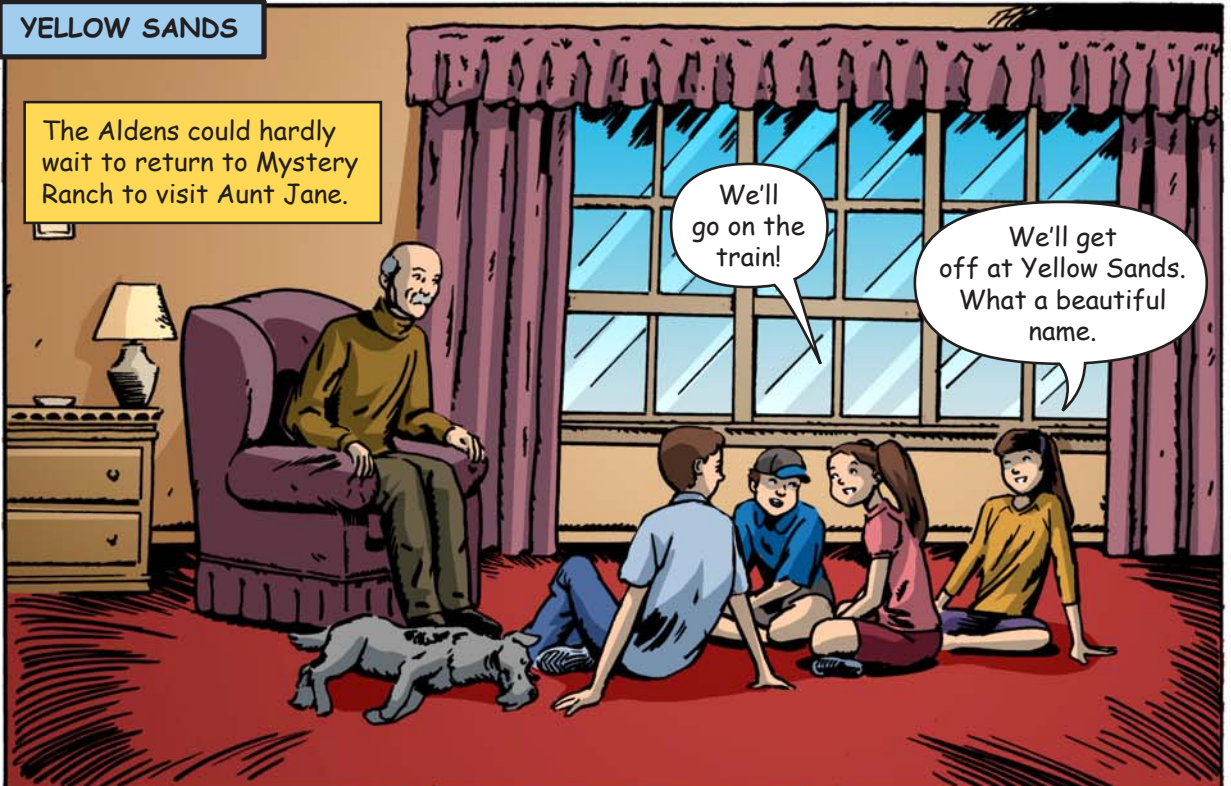
BOOK FIVE
MIKE'S MYSTERY

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YELLOW SANDS

The Aldens could hardly wait to return to Mystery Ranch to visit Aunt Jane.



Sam will meet you there.

Too bad Watch has to ride in the baggage car.

I'll ride in the baggage car, too. Then he won't mind.

Benny, I'm afraid you can't do that. But you can go and see him once in a while.

At last, they were off
to Mystery Ranch.



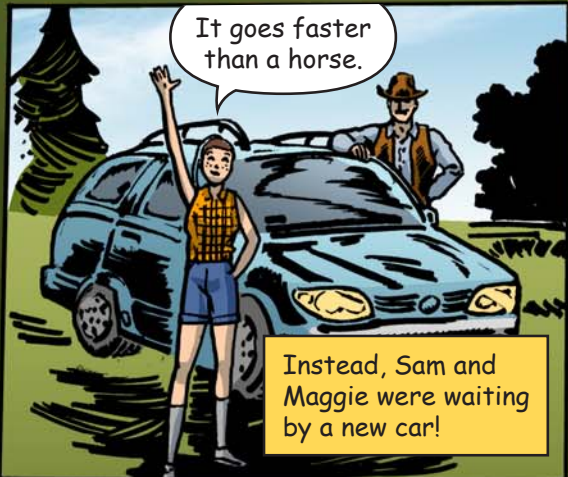
When they got off the
train at Yellow Sands,
they looked for the old
black horse and wagon.



Hello,
Sam!

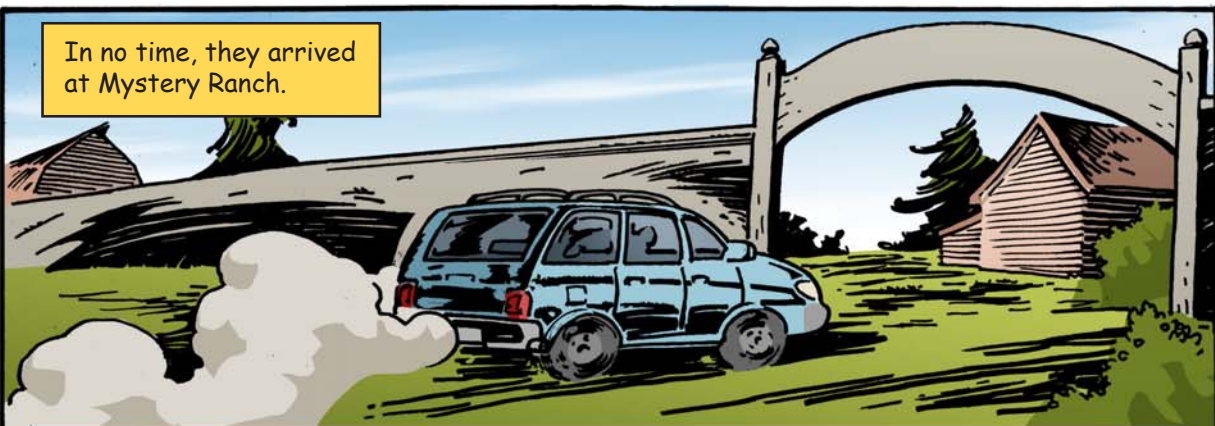


It goes faster
than a horse.



Instead, Sam and
Maggie were waiting
by a new car!

In no time, they arrived
at Mystery Ranch.



Aunt Jane
was so glad
to see them!



Watch didn't care much for
Aunt Jane's new dog, Lady.



But when lunch was ready, Watch
and Lady lay down. All was well.





AN OLD FRIEND

Aunt Jane had given the Alden children Mystery Ranch the summer before. And they had discovered a mine on it! So of course, they wanted to see how it had changed.



I suppose Grandfather had to get hundreds of miners to work in the mine. And the miners have lots of children. That's how the town grew.

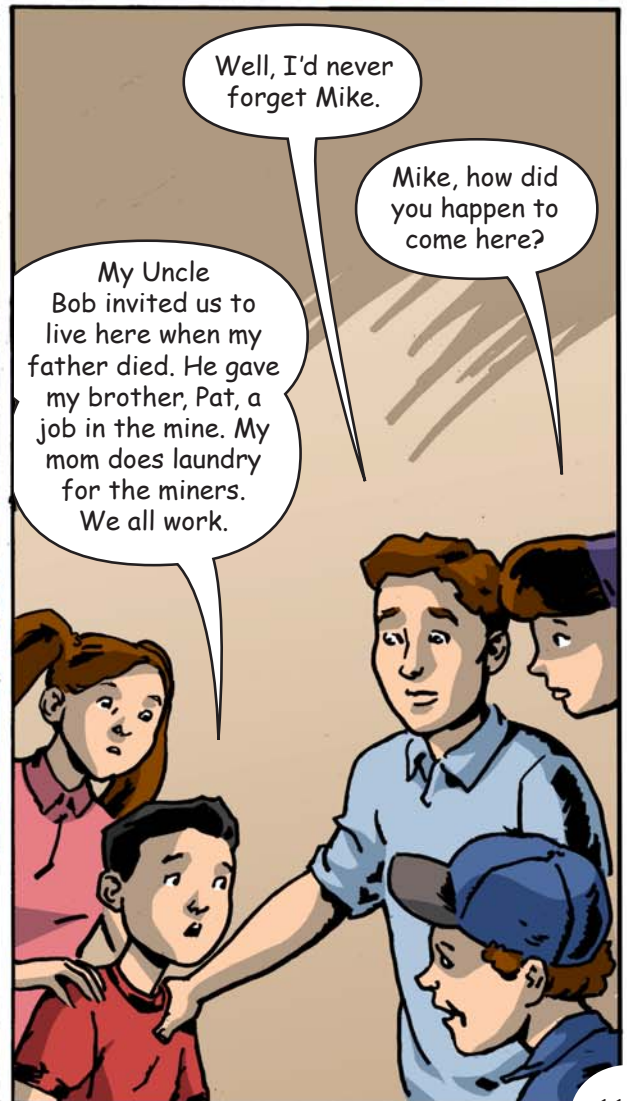


It was strange to see a city street in the middle of what used to be an old field.



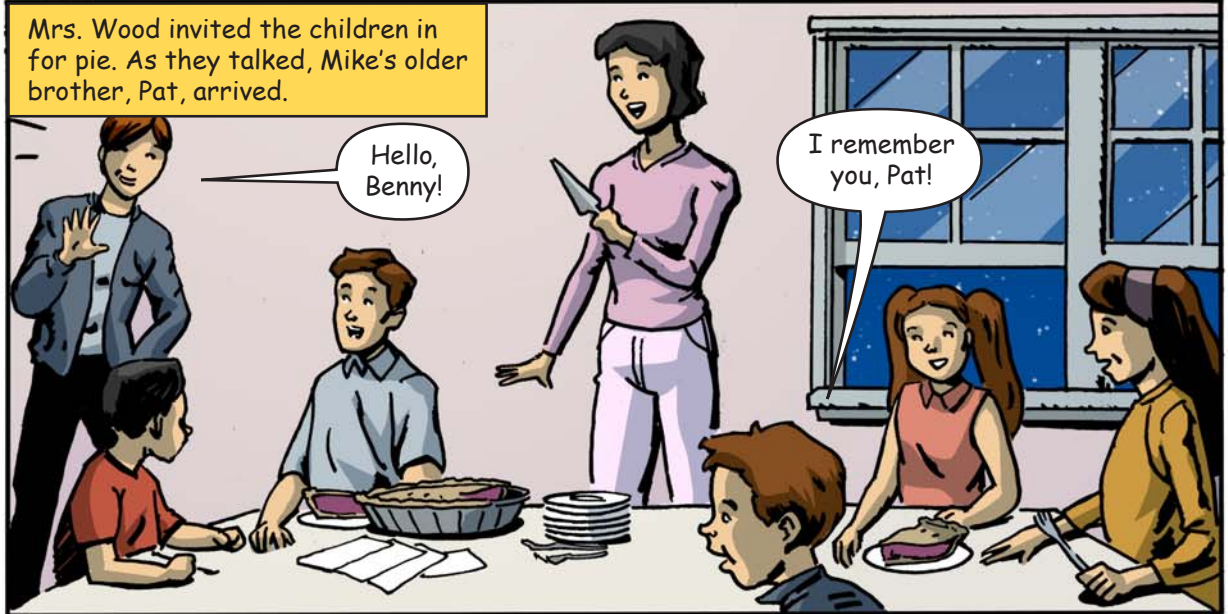
What a beautiful store!







Mrs. Wood invited the children in for pie. As they talked, Mike's older brother, Pat, arrived.



FIRE!

That night, the children slept soundly. But the next morning, they learned that something horrible had happened during the night.

The paper says the Woods' house burned to the ground!

No one was hurt. Their big dog, Spotty, barked and gave the alarm.

You should all go see if Mike's family needs anything.

We're going to stay with Mr. Carter.

You mean John Carter?

Mike, what are you going to do?



AT THE BIG TABLE



How did you know the house was on fire?

Spotty sleeps in the cellar. He barked and barked, so I went down to see. There was a fire on all four sides. I let Spotty out and woke up Mom and Pat.



It is very strange that the fire started in four places at once.



I heard the young boy who lived there set the fire.



I did not! Who says I did?!

Mike never did! He wouldn't!



Well,
don't get so
excited.

Don't
get excited?!
You told a lie
about me!



I'm just saying what I heard.

Can you tell us
who told you?



He was a stranger
to me. He
stood beside
me watching
the fire.



All I can
remember is
that he wore
a blue hat.

THE EMPTY ROOM

After they left the restaurant, Mr. Carter invited the children to go with him to the mine.



They marveled at the sight of the miners busy at work.



I'm going to the office for few minutes.

Can we go into that big building?



Sure, but it's empty. Just one big room. Nothing to see.





A big room going to waste!

Do you remember what Mrs. Wood said to us about baking pies?



Yes. She said she wished she could bake pies instead of doing laundry.



If we could get a stove in this empty room--

Mrs. Wood could bake in it!



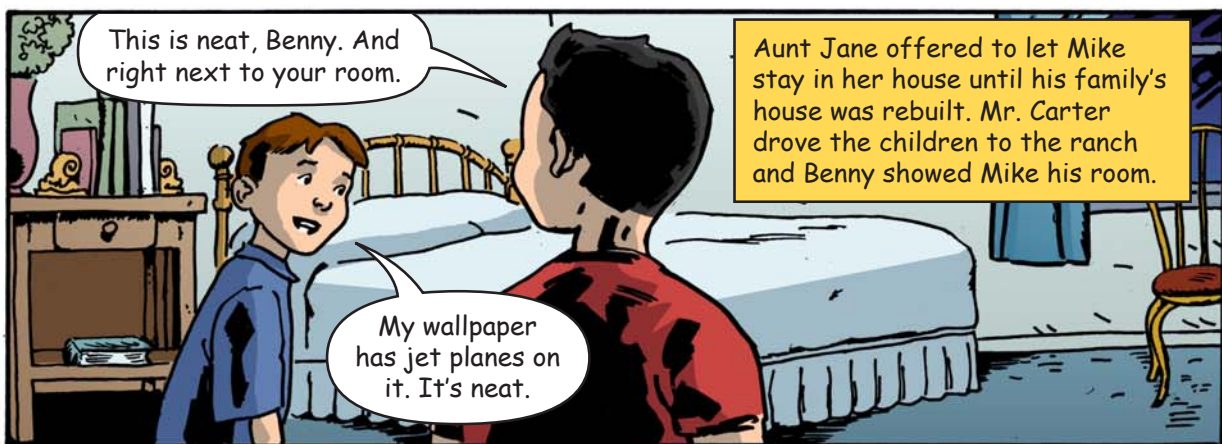
My mother could sell pies! We could make money.

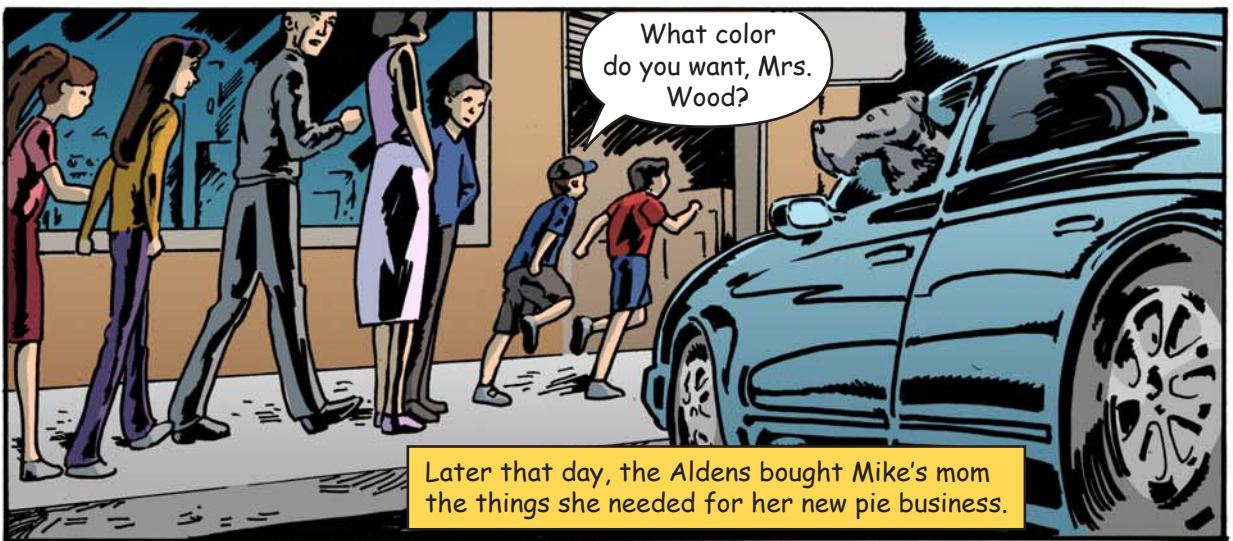
We'll ask Mr. Carter.

**MIKE'S
MOTHER'S
PLACE**

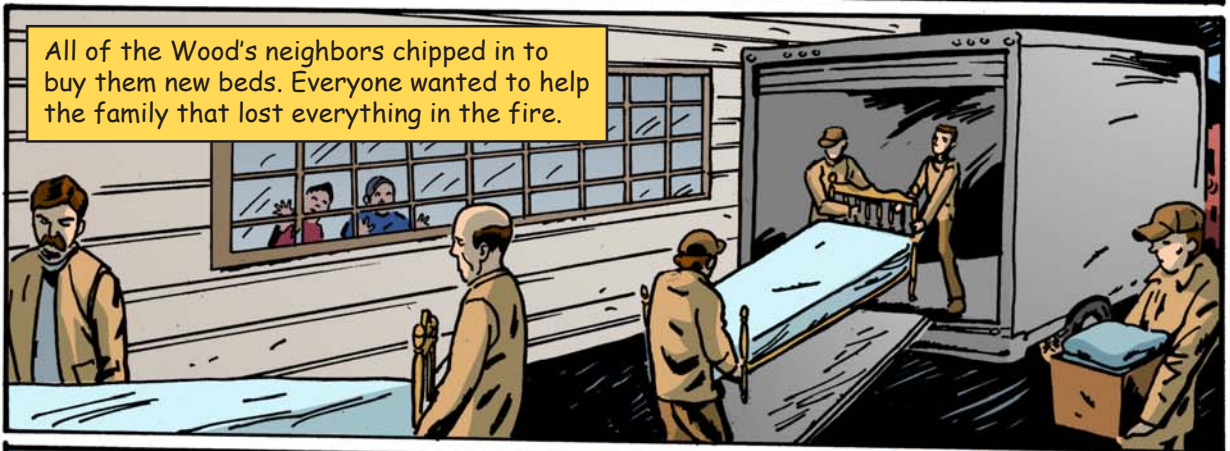
Mr. Carter thought it was a wonderful idea. The Aldens brought Mrs. Wood to the mine to tell her their plan. Mr. McCarthy, the night watchman at the mine, joined them.



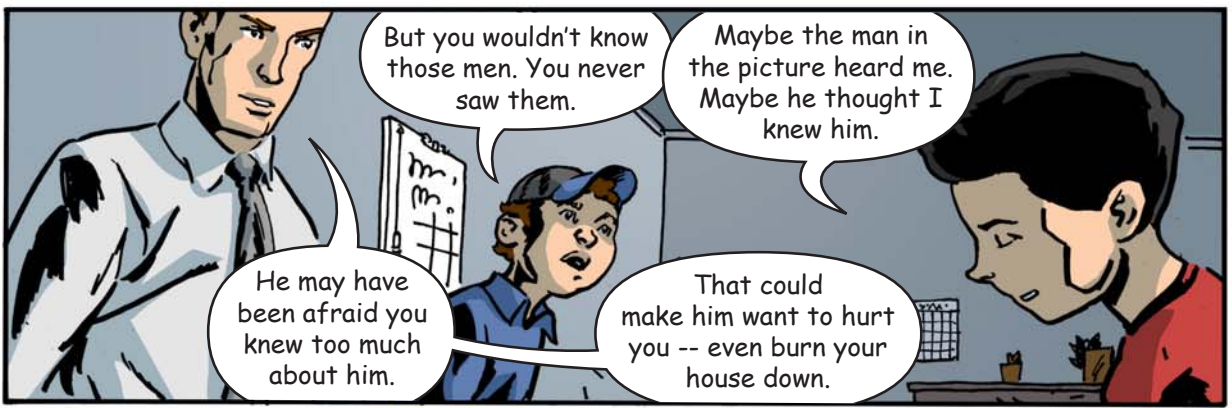












The next morning, Violet brought a sign to hang on the building. Henry hung it above the door, then the children helped Mrs. Wood make pies.

Now tell us what to do, Mrs. Wood!

After selling all the pies, the group ate lunch and then cleaned up.

Let's race the dogs!

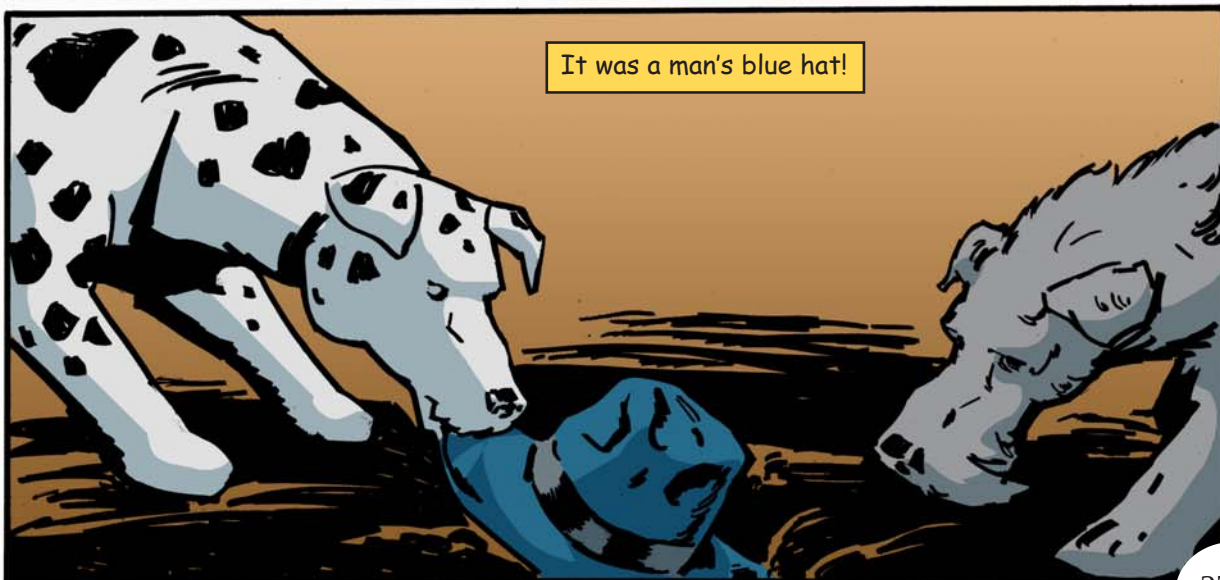
We've done enough work for today.

You count, Violet.

One, two, three, go!

Away went the dogs! Once Spotty got ahead. Then Watch got ahead. Then they were even.

Suddenly, Spotty skidded to a stop. He ran back, smelled around, and began to dig.



AN EMPTY CAN

Watch suddenly began to dig again. He found a big, empty gasoline can.

Let's give the dogs the bones and go see Mr. Carter.

After showing Mr. Carter what they had found, the children returned home for dinner. After they were finished, Mike had a question for Aunt Jane.

Aunt Jane, you said you didn't look closely at the newspaper photo. Will you look at it now?

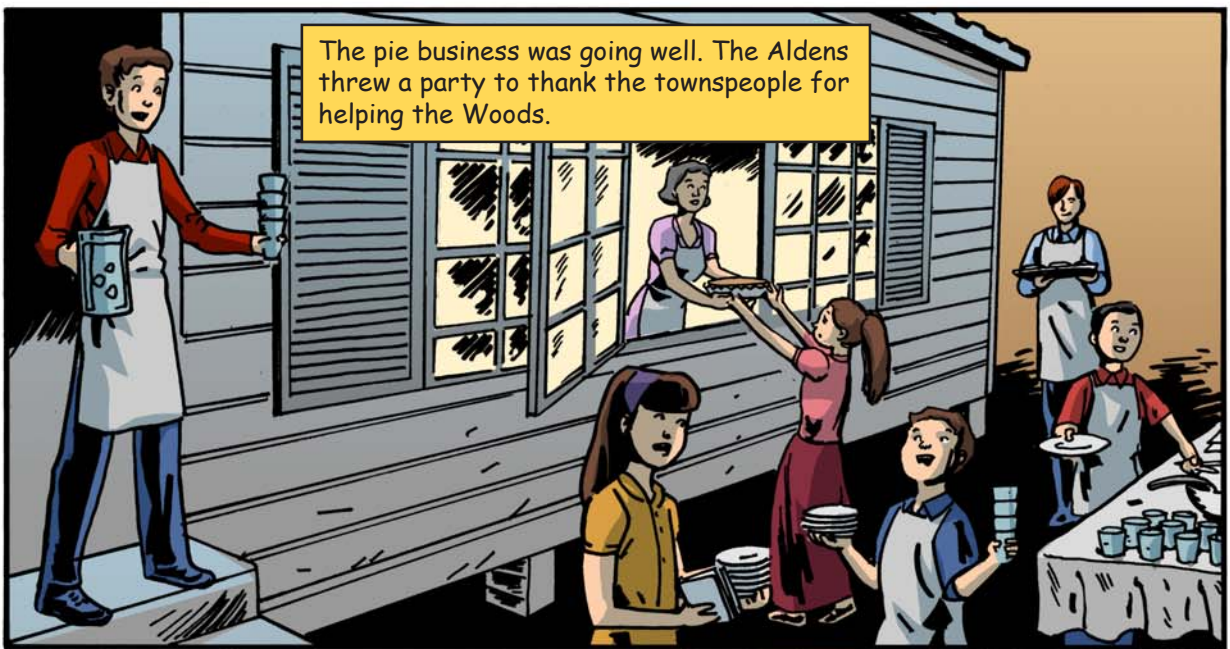
Certainly.

I know that man! He's one of the men who tried to buy my ranch. I'd know him anywhere.

Just then, the phone rang. It was for Benny.

This is Mr. Carter. We found wires behind the mine. Someone was going to blow it up!

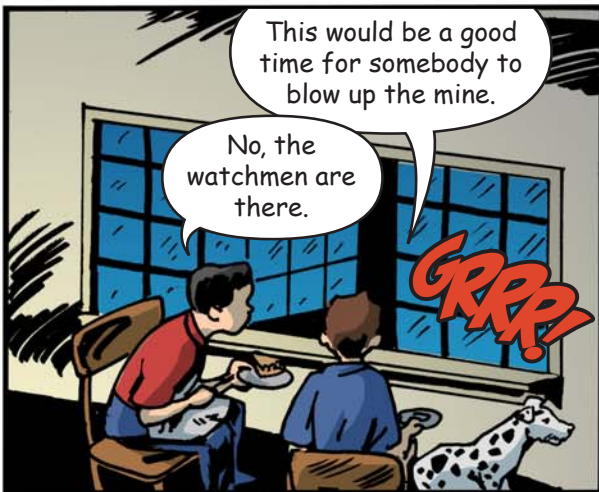
Thanks to you and Mike, we got the wires out.



The pie business was going well. The Aldens threw a party to thank the townspeople for helping the Woods.



It was a wonderful time.



This would be a good time for somebody to blow up the mine.

No, the watchmen are there.

GRRR!



Spotty, come back here!



The hunt for the man in the blue hat is over. He's been caught.

It was good news for everyone. The mystery -- Mike's Mystery -- had been solved!



ABOUT THE CREATOR

Gertrude Chandler Warner was born on April 16, 1890, in Putnam, Connecticut. In 1918, Warner began teaching at Israel Putnam School. As a teacher, she discovered that many readers who liked an exciting story could not find books that were both easy and fun to read. She decided to try to meet this need. In 1942, *The Boxcar Children* was published for these readers.

Warner drew on her own experience to write *The Boxcar Children*. As a child she spent hours watching trains go by on the tracks near her family home. She often dreamed about what it would be like to live in a caboose or freight car—just as the Alden children do.

When readers asked for more Alden adventures, Warner began additional stories. While the mystery element is central to each of the books, she never thought of them as strictly juvenile mysteries. She liked to stress the Aldens' independence. Henry, Jessie, Violet, and Benny go about most of their adventures with as little adult supervision as possible—something that delights young readers.

During her lifetime, Warner received hundreds of letters from fans as she continued the Aldens' adventures, writing nineteen Boxcar Children books in all. After her death in 1979, her publisher, Albert Whitman and Company, carried on Warner's vision. Today, the Boxcar Children series has more than 100 books.

