

THE NAME OF THIS BOOK IS

READ THIS BOOK—
IF YOU DARE!

SECRET



pseudonymous bosch

CHAPTER TWO





I'm sorry I couldn't let you read Chapter One.

That was where you would have learned the names of the characters in this story. You also would have learned where it takes place. And when. You would have learned all the things you usually learn at the beginning of a book.

Unfortunately, I can't tell you any of those things.

Yes, this is a story *about* a secret. But it's also a *secret story*.

I shouldn't even be telling you that I shouldn't be telling you the story. That's how much of a secret it is.

Not only can't I tell you the names of the people involved, I can't even tell you what they've done or why.

I can't tell you what kind of pets they have. Or how many annoying little brothers. Or how many bossy big sisters. Or whether they like their ice cream plain or with mix-ins.

I can't tell you about their schools or their friends or their favorite television shows. Or if they ride skateboards. Or if they are champion chess players. Or if they compete in fencing competitions. Or even if they wear braces.

In short, I can't tell you anything that would help you identify the people involved in this story if you were to meet them at your orthodontist's office.

knowing whom the story's about, it's also hard to read a story without knowing where the story takes place. Even if you were reading about extraterrestrials from another dimension, you'd want to imagine something about their surroundings. Like that they lived in a murky green miasma. Or in some place really hot.

Although the real location of this story will have to remain a mystery, to make it easier for all of us, why don't we say the story takes place in *a place you know very well*?

We'll call it Your Hometown.

When you read about the town the characters live in, just think of the town you live in. Is the town big or little? By the sea or by a lake? Or is your town all asphalt and shopping malls? You tell me.

When you read about the characters' school, think of Your School. Is it in an old one-room school-house or in a bunch of double wide mobile homes? You decide.

When they go home, imagine they live on Your Street, maybe even in a house right across from yours.

Who knows, maybe Your Street is where the story really takes place. I wouldn't tell you if it was. But I couldn't tell you for certain that it's not.

In return for all the freedom I'm giving you, I ask

THIS IS A STORY ABOUT A SECRET,
BUT IT ALSO CONTAINS A SECRET STORY.

WHEN ADVENTUROUS DETECTIVES, CASS, AN EVER-VIGILANT SURVIVALIST, AND MAX-ERNEST, A BOY DRIVEN BY LOGIC, DISCOVER THE SYMPHONY OF SMELLS, A BOX FILLED WITH SMELLY VIALS OF COLORFUL INGREDIENTS, THEY ACCIDENTALLY STUMBLE UPON A MYSTERY SURROUNDING A DEAD MAGICIAN'S HIDDEN DIARY AND THE HUNT FOR IMMORTALITY.

FILLED WITH WORD GAMES, ANAGRAMS, AND FEATURING A MYSTERIOUS NARRATOR, THIS IS A BOOK THAT WON'T STAY SECRET FOR LONG.

PRAISE FOR
The Name of This Book Is Secret:

AN EDGAR AWARD NOMINEE

"Equal parts snarky and delightful."

—Booklist