

Helping your children choose books they will love



Lovereading4kids.co.uk is a book website
created for parents and children to make
choosing books easy and fun

Opening extract from
**The Mysteries of Harris
Burdick**

Written by
Chris Van Allsburg

Published by
Andersen Press Ltd

All Text is Copyright © of the Author and/or Illustrator

Please print off and read at your leisure.

With thanks to
Peter Wenders

This Paperback edition first published in Great Britain in 2011 by
Andersen Press Ltd., 20 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 2SA.
First published in USA in 1984 by Houghton Mifflin Books for Children,
an imprint of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.
Published in Australia by Random House Australia Pty Ltd.,
Level 3, 100 Pacific Highway, North Sydney, NSW 2060.
Copyright © 1984 by Chris Van Allsburg.

The rights of Chris Van Allsburg to be identified as the
author and illustrator of this work have been asserted by him in
accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988.
All rights reserved.

Printed and bound in Singapore by Tien Wah Press.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data available.
ISBN 978 1 84939 279 2

This book has been printed on acid-free paper

INTRODUCTION

I first saw the drawings in this book a year ago, in the home of a man named Peter Wenders. Though Mr Wenders is retired now, he once worked for a children's book publisher, choosing the stories and pictures that would be turned into books.

Thirty years ago a man called at Peter Wenders's office, introducing himself as Harris Burdick. Mr Burdick explained that he had written fourteen stories and had drawn many pictures for each one. He'd brought with him just one drawing from each story, to see if Wenders liked his work.

Peter Wenders was fascinated by the drawings. He told Burdick he would like to read the stories that went with them as soon as possible. The artist agreed to bring the stories the next morning. He left the fourteen drawings with Wenders. But he did not return the next day. Or the day after that. Harris Burdick was never heard from again. Over the years, Wenders tried to find out who Burdick was and what had happened to him, but he discovered nothing. To this day Harris Burdick remains a complete mystery.

His disappearance is not the only mystery left behind. What were the stories that went with these drawings? There are some clues. Burdick had written a title and caption for each picture. When I told Peter Wenders how difficult it was to look at the drawings and their captions without imagining a story, he smiled and left the room. He returned with a dust-covered cardboard box. Inside were dozens of stories, all inspired by the Burdick drawings. They'd been written years ago by Wenders's children and their friends.

I spent the rest of my visit reading these stories. They were remarkable, some bizarre, some funny, some downright scary. In the hope that other children will be inspired by them, the Burdick drawings are reproduced here for the first time.

Chris Van Allsburg
Providence, Rhode Island

ARCHIE SMITH, BOY WONDER

A tiny voice asked, "Is he the one?"



UNDER THE RUG

Two weeks passed and it happened again.



MISSING IN VENICE

*Even with her mighty engines in reverse,
the ocean liner was pulled further and
further into the canal.*

