



# How to Disappear Completely and Never Be Found

By Sara Nickerson

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## How to Disappear Completely and Never Be Found By Sara Nickerson

Margaret always knew that her family was a little strange. Not that she was exactly normal herself. After all, she did do her sixth-grade science report on a pack of killer Chihuahuas. Even stranger was the fact that Margaret's mother never seemed to talk about anything anymore -- not since the mysterious drowning death of Margaret's father three years earlier.

Then Margaret's mother takes her and her little sister, Sophie, to an old abandoned mansion and places a **FOR SALE BY OWNER** sign in the front yard. But who could have lived there? And why was her mother keeping it all such a secret?

Convinced that her father's death, her mother's silence, and the mansion are somehow related, Margaret returns to the spooky old house alone, determined to make sense of three clues: a swimming medal, a key, and a strange, handwritten comic book about a boy who turned into a rat. With the help of Boyd, the lonely, comic-book-obsessed boy next door, she discovers that truth can be stranger than fiction -- depending upon who's telling the story.

An offbeat mystery about coincidence, fate, and the many different ways to tell the same story, *How to Disappear Completely and Never Be Found* is the unforgettable tale of a twelve-year-old girl who discovers just how terribly beautiful and wonderfully bizarre the world and the people around her can be.

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## How to Disappear Completely and Never Be Found By Sara Nickerson Bibliography

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## **Editorial Review**

### **From Publishers Weekly**

First-time novelist Nickerson follows an arresting first paragraph with an ambitious but somewhat overengineered tale. Margaret's family has unraveled in the four years since her father's death her mother barely speaks, Margaret is such an outcast at school that she eats lunch in a bathroom stall and her bouncy little sister is obsessed with jigsaw puzzles. When her mother inexplicably drives them to an island and sets up a For Sale sign outside a derelict mansion, Margaret finds a package inside containing a strange comic book, her father's swimming medal and a rusty key. Why did her father drown if he was a champion swimmer? Who is the comic's author, Ratt, and what about the Drowning Ghost who features so largely in his book? Eventually, at the urging of her sole friend, Tina Louise (who all but disappears in the book's second half), Margaret runs away to the island to find answers. Together with Boyd, a lonely boy who lives next door to the mansion and is a Ratt fan (the comics appear regularly on the doorstep of the island's singularly odd library), she solves the multiple mysteries in a somewhat melodramatic climax. Juggling comic strip panels, multiple viewpoints and arch "editor's notes," Nickerson sets up a complex framework that at times works to the story's advantage by adding tension, but often simply overwhelms it. If the structure is unwieldy, the prose stays compelling throughout the sign of a writer with promise. Ages 10-up.

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### **From School Library Journal**

Grade 6-10-Margaret Clairmont, 12, can barely remember her father or the last time her mother woke up long enough to take them somewhere beyond the grocery store and Laundromat. Their sudden unexpected visit to place a "For Sale by Owner" sign on a dilapidated mansion on an island in the Pacific Northwest is the basis of this interesting mystery. The resolution of a long-standing family tragedy is slowly pieced together in this novel that bears a strong resemblance to Margaret's little sister Sophie's favorite distraction, "THE HARDEST JIGSAW EVER MADE." Parts of the story are Margaret's, describing in a relatively straightforward fashion her secret return to the island to find an explanation for the comic she found in an unopened package addressed to her mother. Parts belong to Boyd, the boy who lives next door to the mansion physically but dwells emotionally within the comics that appear in the island's odd library. Underneath their story is that of an earlier unhappy teenager, who found himself growing physically repulsive as he matured. He became more and more reclusive, even ratlike, and grew to be a man who could never rid himself of his guilt over the death of his idolized older brother. Most of the story is told in prose, in first or third person, but some parts are revealed in the graphic form of the comic books. Even the narrator twists and turns, as the first-person storyteller's identity changes. The satisfying ending will reward readers who have made their way through this tangled tale, but all but the best will probably find themselves considerably confused along the way.

*Kathleen Isaacs, Edmund Burke School, Washington, DC*

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### **From Booklist**

Gr. 4-8. Twelve-year-old Margaret's father has died and Mom, deeply depressed, has left Margaret to cope with her effervescent young sister and her own loneliness. Meanwhile, 12-year-old Boyd is dealing with his parents' conversion to a macrobiotic diet and bullies in school. The two kids meet after Margaret's mother takes the girls to a broken-down mansion next door to Boyd's house. Margaret is curious about how the mansion fits into her family's past, and with Boyd's help, uncovers the facts behind what appear to be supernatural terrors. The story evolves through a clever mix of Margaret's viewpoint, an omniscient report on

Boyd's troubles, pages from a homemade comic book, and editorial asides from the man who runs a strange library where new episodes of the comic surface daily. Readers will easily suspend disbelief as they sink into the *Twilight Zone*-like plot, and Comport's comic-book artwork not only extends the plot of the novel but also stands on its own as fully realized ministories. *Francisca Goldsmith*

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#### **Diana Gum:**

Reading can called head hangout, why? Because when you are reading a book specifically book entitled How to Disappear Completely and Never Be Found the mind will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in most aspect that maybe unfamiliar for but surely might be your mind friends. Imaging every word written in a book then become one contact form conclusion and explanation in which maybe you never get just before. The How to Disappear Completely and Never Be Found giving you yet another experience more than blown away the mind but also giving you useful info for your better life in this era. So now let us present to you the relaxing pattern is your body and mind will be pleased when you are finished reading through it, like winning an activity. Do you want to try this extraordinary investing spare time activity?

#### **Jeffrey Price:**

In this particular era which is the greater man or woman or who has ability in doing something more are

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