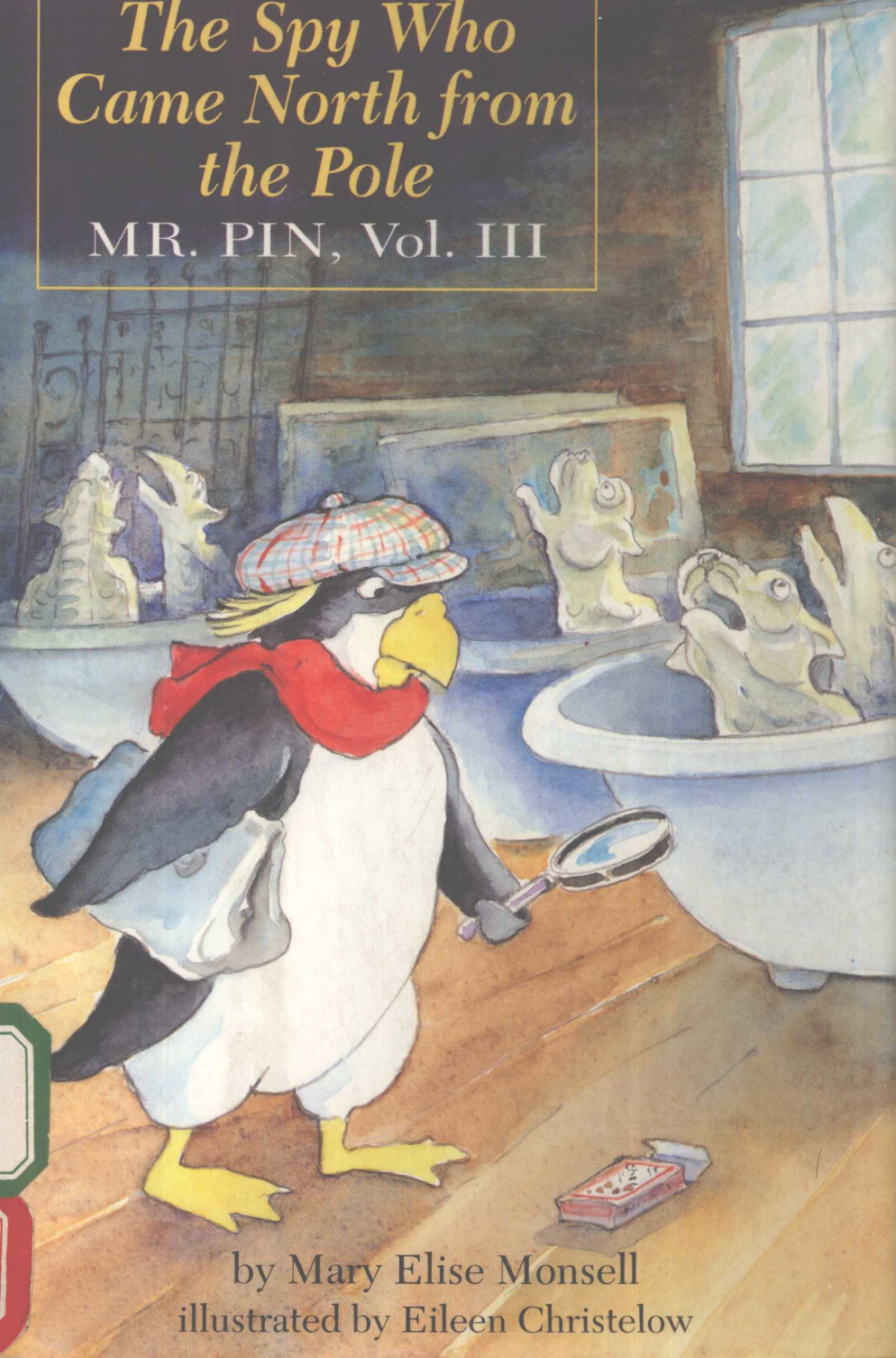


The Spy Who Came North from the Pole

MR. PIN, Vol. III



by Mary Elise Monsell
illustrated by Eileen Christelow

*The Spy Who
Came North from
the Pole:*

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*With high regards to David and Derek,
who know how to keep their
fingers on the seams*
—Mr. Pin

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Could Mr. Pin—the famous rock hopper penguin detective in the Windy City—be involved in a crime himself? That's what Sergeant O'Malley claims in the first of these two new stories about Detective Pin and his sidekick, Maggie. It seems that someone has been stealing or smashing gargoyles that decorate buildings around Chicago, and an eyewitness claims to have seen the one-and-only Mr. Pin fleeing the scene. Or is he the one-and-only?

In the second story Mr. Pin once again displays his remarkable sleuthing skills as well as his talent for America's favorite pastime. While watching a crucial Cubs game at Wrigley Field, Detective Pin finds himself summoned to the office of the team's manager, Walter Wavemin. It seems that one of the team's star relief pitchers, Sam Spitter, has been behaving oddly, and Wavemin depends on Mr. Pin and Maggie to get to the bottom of things and to pull Spitter out of his slump.

Fans of Detective Pin's previous adventures in *The Mysterious Cases of Mr. Pin* and *Mr. Pin: The Chocolate Files* will be equally thrilled and charmed by the master detective's two newest cases.

0710

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Eileen Christelow*

Mary Elise Monsell says, "As an author of children's books, I believe in using humor in my writing. But I take my audience seriously. I try to offer the young reader unusual settings, real characters, and poetic dialogue. A book should literally sing to a child."

Ms. Monsell was born in Cleveland, Ohio, and holds a bachelor's degree in journalism from Northwestern University. She is currently involved in the Chicago Writing Project, giving writing workshops to children and teachers throughout Chicago. Besides the Mr. Pin books, her previous books for Atheneum include *Crackle Creek*, *Toohy and Wood*, and *Armadillo*, a picture book. Ms. Monsell lives in Evanston, Illinois.

Eileen Christelow studied architecture at the University of Pennsylvania and since has worked as a free-lance photographer, graphic designer, author, and illustrator. Her books include *Two Terrible Frights* and *The Completed Hickory Dickory Dock*, both written by Jim Aylesworth, and the previous two titles about Mr. Pin, written by Mary Elise Monsell. Ms. Christelow lives in Dummerston, Vermont, with her husband and daughter.

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*The Spy Who
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Crackle Creek

The Mysterious Cases of Mr. Pin

Mr. Pin: The Chocolate Files

Armadillo

Toohy and Wood

The Spy Who Came North from the Pole:
Mr. Pin, Vol. III

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*The Spy Who
Came North
from the Pole*





1

The sky was dark. The air was cold and foggy. It had been days since a rock hopper penguin had left the South Pole and made his way north to Chicago.

A black wing pulled the bus cord at Wabash Street. The driver watched as the penguin stepped into the fog. Strange. He thought that penguin looked familiar.

“Mind your step,” the driver said. The penguin snarled back.

The door creaked shut and the bus headed west. The rock hopper headed north.

He was mostly black and white, with long yellow plumes on both sides of his head. He carried a mysterious brown bag under his wing.

Suddenly an elevated train screeched to a stop. A tall man in a trench coat came up to the railing and tossed a small box over the side. As the train screeched away, the rock hopper picked up the box. There was chocolate inside.

“*Frango mints!*” he said out loud. He took a magnifying glass out of his brown bag and looked

more closely. There was a note inside the box. The rock hopper quickly ate the chocolates, then read the note:

CODEBOOK CLUE IN GARGOYLE

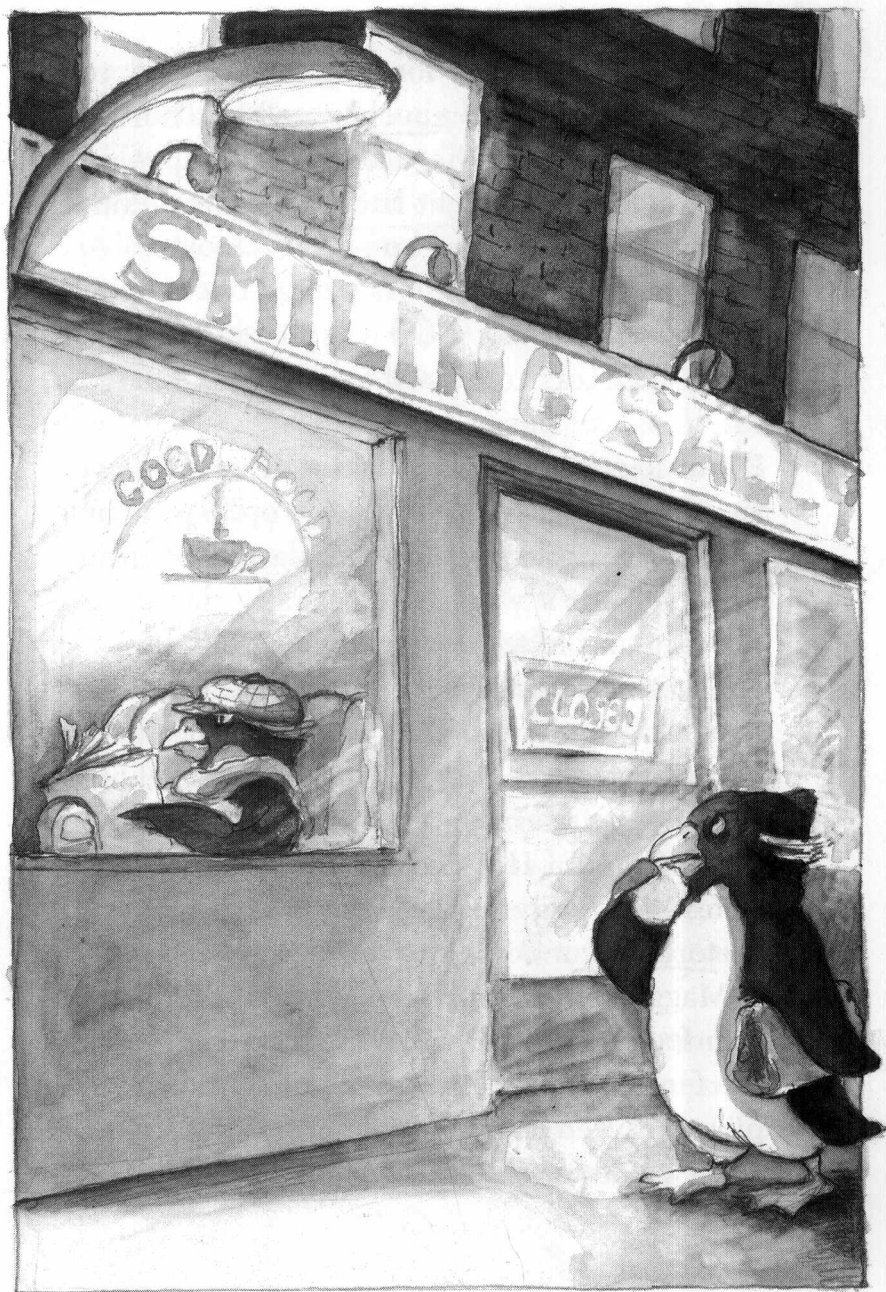
He got the idea all right. The clue he was looking for was hidden in a gargoyle. Now he just needed to find the right one. But where? Those strange carved-stone creatures were on buildings all over the city. Not only that, but they were usually up very high. And penguins don't fly.

It was also a little strange that the clue to the whereabouts of the codebook was in a gargoyle to begin with. But in any case, his plan seemed to be working.

"Looks like I arrived in Chicago just in time," he said out loud.

Just ahead was a diner—Smiling Sally's Good Food. The penguin outside saw another penguin sitting in a booth near the window. I wonder, thought the rock hopper, what would have happened if *that* penguin had seen this box first?

"Too late," he said out loud again. "But on the other hand, maybe he *should* see it . . . or one almost like it."



With sinister plans forming in his mind, the rock hopper penguin chucked softly to himself, turned away from the diner, and disappeared into the fog. A moment later the lights in Smiling Sally's Diner went out.

2

It was foggy again the next day. The thick, wet air rolled down the sidewalks like sleepwalking ghosts. It would have been a day to be inside Smiling Sally's warm and friendly diner. But Mr. Pin and Maggie were somewhere else.

The two detectives were on the second floor of an old warehouse. They were looking for new stools for Smiling Sally's Diner. The warehouse belonged to Maggie's uncle Otis, who lived on the top floor. He sold an odd assortment of things that he rescued from buildings about to be torn down.

Maggie and Mr. Pin stood between a row of iron fences and old bathtubs with feet. Next to the fences and bathtubs were rows and rows of pillars, carved doors, marble fireplaces, stained-glass windows, restaurant booths, stools, sinks,

doorknobs, hinges, and even staircases. Inside each bathtub was a gargoyle.

“This place is spooky,” said Maggie as she looked at the peculiar expressions on the gargoyles’ faces. “It’s weird seeing old bathtubs all lined up and no one around to take a bath. And what are these things? They look like monsters.”

“They’re gargoyles,” said Mr. Pin. “Some gargoyles look like monsters. Some just look like animals. You’ve seen them decorating old buildings, sometimes at the very top.”

“I don’t know how Otis can live here,” said Maggie.

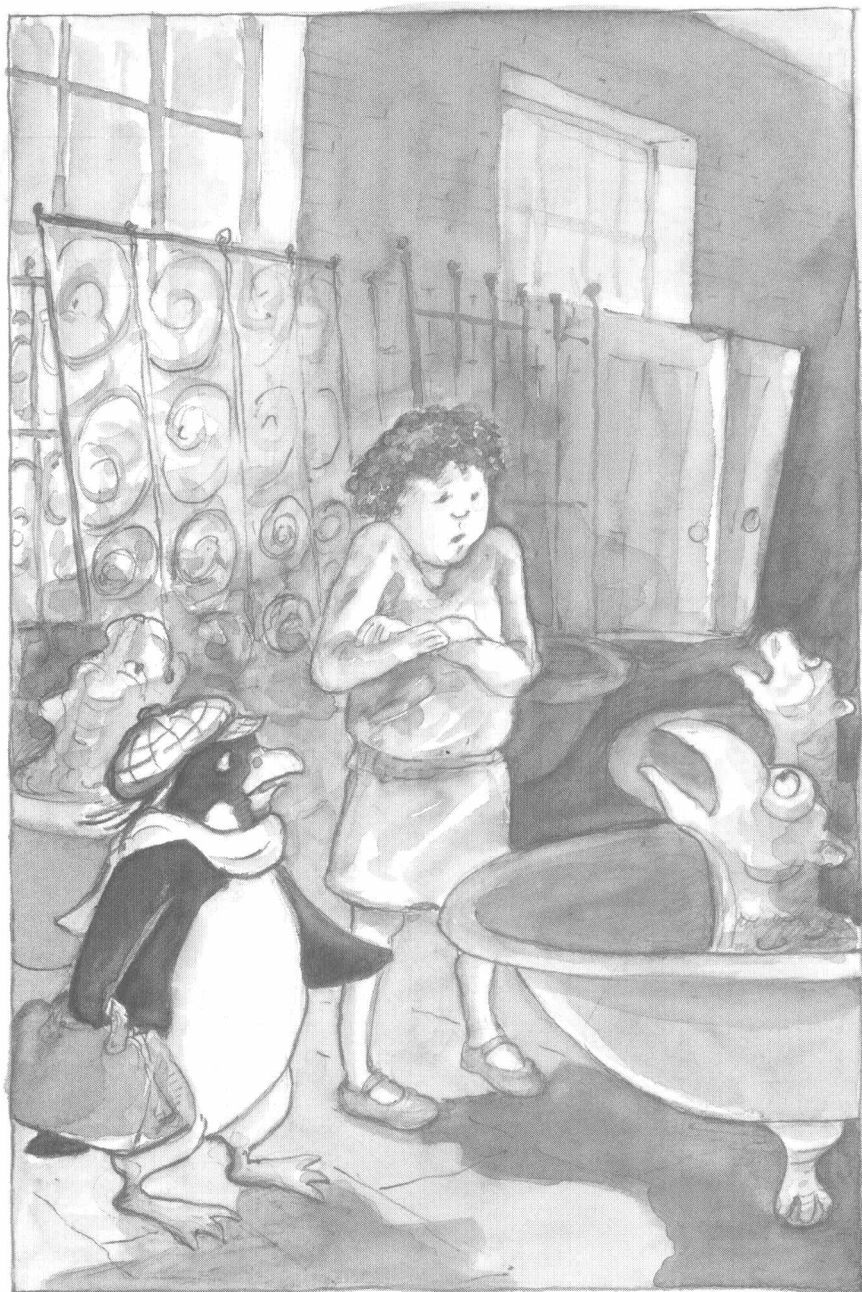
The knotted floorboards creaked.

Maggie shivered. “We should get the diner stools for Sally and go home. This place is giving me nightmares, and I’m not even asleep yet.”

A low, groaning rumble shook the building. An elevator shuddered as it was lowered slowly down the shaft at the end of the row of bathtubs. A grated door opened, and a short, balding man wearing a striped vest stepped out.

“Uncle Otis!” shouted Maggie. “I’m glad to see you. Any minute now I was sure I was going to see a ghost.”

“Hasn’t been one here for a few months,” said



Uncle Otis. Only half of his mouth turned up in a smile.

“This is Mr. Pin,” said Maggie.

“Detective Pin. Reasonable rates,” said the rock hopper penguin, tipping his checked cap.
Crash!!

“What was that?” asked Otis.

“A ghost!” cried Maggie.

“No,” said Mr. Pin, darting between columns. “Someone dropped a gargoyle.”

“A thief?” asked Otis.

“I don’t know,” said Mr. Pin.

“I thought I heard breathing before, and it wasn’t ours,” said Maggie.

Maggie and Otis rushed over to where Mr. Pin was examining an odd-shaped stone face that had been broken into several pieces.

“What is it?” asked Maggie.

“It used to be a gargoyle,” said Mr. Pin.

“So where’s the thief now?” asked Otis.

“A thief is only one possibility,” corrected Mr. Pin.

But just then they heard running footsteps. A dark figure stepped into the elevator.

“Over there!” said Mr. Pin, pointing with his wing. They ran to the elevator, but it was too late. The door had squeaked shut. 原有行損