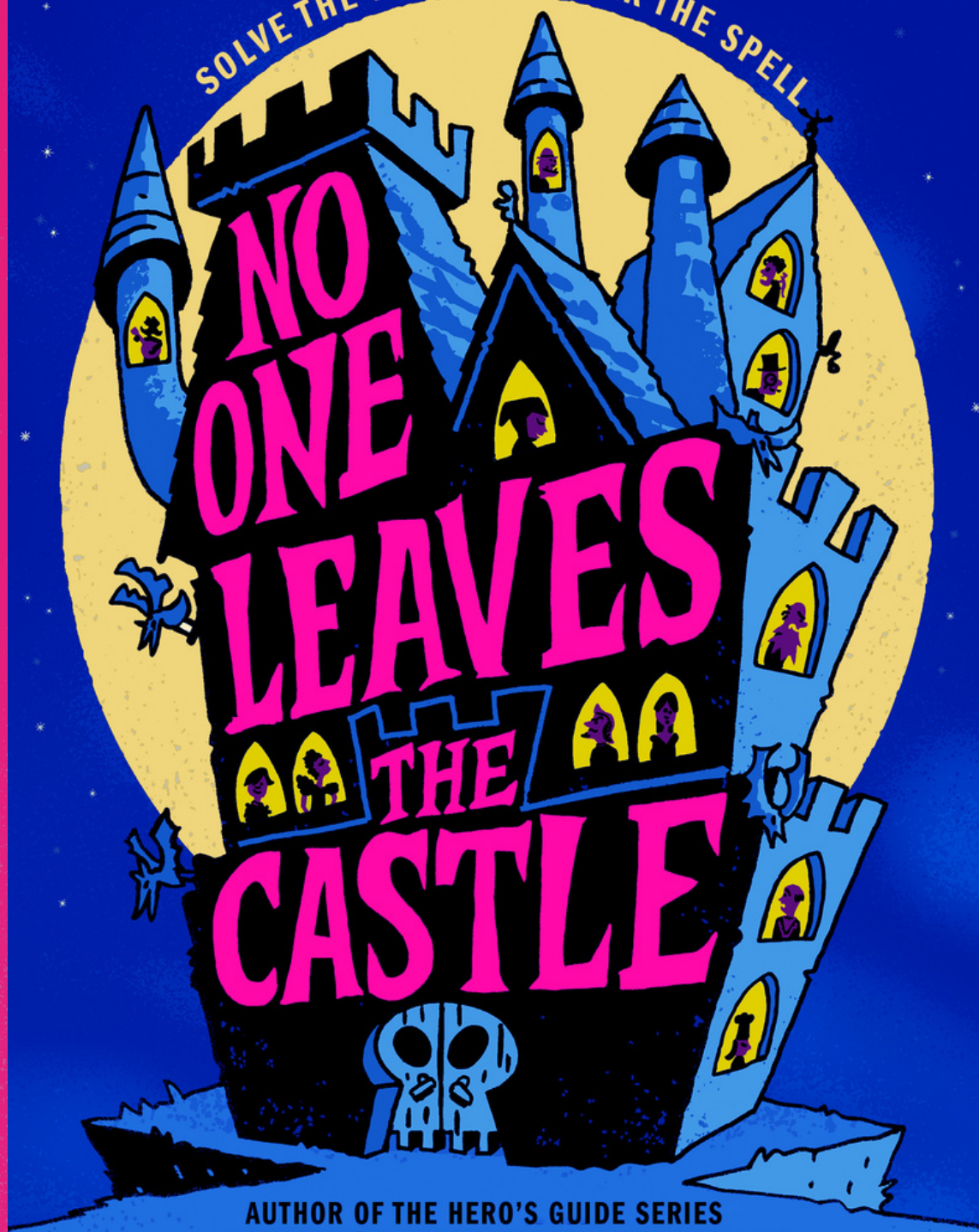


SOLVE THE MYSTERY, BREAK THE SPELL

NO ONE LEAVES THE CASTLE



AUTHOR OF THE HERO'S GUIDE SERIES
CHRISTOPHER HEALY

NO ONE LEAVES THE CASTLE

BY CHRISTOPHER HEALY:

DISCUSSION GUIDE

- 1.** In the Thirteen Kingdoms, it is tradition for bounty hunters to choose a name for themselves that contains a color, like the Lilac, Ruffian the Blue, or Periwinkle Pete. What would you choose to be your “bounty hunter name?” Would you use your favorite color in the name? Or a color that best fits your personality?
- 2.** The Angbar family is distressed by the theft of their family heirloom, the Emerald Axe of Angbar. But heirlooms come in many different forms. An heirloom can be anything that is passed down from one generation of family members to another. Some are worth lots of money, but most are valuable only because they have sentimental meaning to the family. Does your family have any heirlooms? If not, what do you own that you would choose to pass down to future generations?
- 3.** “Red herring” might sound like a bad bounty hunter name, but it’s actually a colorful term used to describe false “clues” in a mystery that seem very suspicious, but don’t actually lead to the mystery’s solution. Are there any red herrings you can find in *No One Leaves the Castle*? Did any of them fool you?

4. There's no rule that says books can only be one kind of book. *No One Leaves the Castle* blends two different story genres—fantasy and mystery. (And throws in a bit of comedy as well.) What two literary genres would you like to see combined in a story? Historical and science fiction? Sports and secret agents? Romance and talking animals? Come up with a custom blend and write your own story.

5. The chapter titles in *No One Leaves the Castle* all make reference to common elements of mystery stories (The Suspects, The Scene of the Crime, The Final Twist, etc.). Are there any other themes or plot elements that you see a lot in mysteries that weren't used here? How might the chapter titles have been different if they focused on the fantasy aspects of the book, rather than the mystery?

6. One chapter is called, "The Process of Elimination." This is a common technique used in mysteries, in which the detective—or the reader—finds clues that eliminate various suspects from possibly being the culprit. After most of the suspects have been eliminated from suspicion, the only person left can be assumed to be guilty. Are you able to use a process of elimination in *No One Leaves the Castle*? Which suspects—if any—can you eliminate before the ending? Why?

7. Several of the characters are hiding secrets—some much worse than others. How do you feel about the “non-guilty” characters (meaning those who are not the killer) and their dark secrets at the end? Do you consider any of them “guilty” as well? How would you handle each of the characters if you were the detective?

8. In the book, Netta talks about the idea of “taking control of your own story” and “writing your own ending.” What does she mean by this? How do some of the characters here take control of their own stories? Which ones fail to do so? Do you think “writing your own ending” is a concept that can apply to real life? Can changing the things you do change the way people think about you?

