

---

## THE HOUSE

---

**Key:**

---

---

The two boys ran until they came to the driveway. “See, I told you today was good for skipping school,” said Mark. “My mom is never home on Thursdays,” he added. Tall hedges hid the house from the road, so the pair strolled across the finely landscaped yard enclosed by a stone wall. “I never knew that your place was so big,” exclaimed Pete. “Yeah, but it’s nicer now than it used to be, since my dad built the Olympic-sized infinity pool and added the indoor basketball court.”

There were front and back doors as well as a side door that led to the five-car garage, which was filled with cars—including a Ferrari and a Cadillac Escalade with chrome rims— three mountain bikes, and two jet skis. As they entered the side door, Mark explained that this door was always open in case his younger sisters got home earlier than their mom.

Pete wanted to see the house, so Mark started with the living room. It, like the rest of the downstairs, was newly painted. It was adorned with crystal vases, two plasma TVs, a fish tank, and two large leather sofas. Mark turned on the sound system, the noise of which worried Pete. “Don’t worry, the nearest house is a quarter of a mile away,” Mark shouted. Pete felt more comfortable observing that no houses could be seen in any direction beyond the huge yard.

The dining room, with all of the china, silver, and crystal glass was no place to play, so the boys moved into the kitchen where they made sandwiches on the fish-shaped island with the granite countertop. Mark said they shouldn’t go in the basement because they were in the process of adding a bowling alley and a home theatre, which meant it could be very dusty.

As they peered in the den with mahogany paneling and a glass waterfall, Mark mentioned, “This is where my dad keeps his MVP trophies and his Superbowl rings.” Mark bragged that he could get spending money whenever he needed it since he had discovered that his dad kept a lot of extra cash in the top desk drawer.

Upstairs, there were eight bedrooms. Mark showed Pete his mother’s walk-in closet that was filled with furs and a safety deposit box filled with jewelry. His sister’s room was uninteresting except for the newly installed bathroom, which left the hallway bathroom for Mark alone to use. Mark grabbed the portable Xbox out of his sister’s room and carried it up to the third floor playroom, where they discovered a hole in the roof near the fire escape.