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Introduction

Hi, I'm Torrey Mahall, a 4th grade public school student, and the author of this book. Before you start reading the book, there are a few things I want to tell you.

For my mission project, I decided to visit all 21 missions (from September to April), and write a book about them. My idea was to share with you the missions through the eyes of a 4th grader. Although the book is pretty much a tour of each mission, I wrote it around a mystery story to keep it from being too boring.

You don't have to read all the chapters if you don't want to, maybe just the missions you're interested in. However, I think you should read all of them, because each mission is unique.

The purpose of this book is to introduce and to motivate people to go to the missions. Hopefully, this book will convince you to go to one...or more. If you do go to more than one mission, I think it would be a great project to compare and contrast them.

You might wonder why the missions are listed the way they are. Well, this was the order they were founded in and it makes it easier for you to find them in the book. This is *not* the order we visited them in. And it's not the order you should visit them in either! (Imagine driving from San Diego all the way up to Carmel!) The characters did them in this order, because they could! That's the magic of writing!

After the chapter about the Saint Joseph's Day celebration at Mission San Juan Capistrano, I have written an appendix. The appendix is from my point of view. It covers Basilicas, El Camino Real, Father Junipero Serra, and Stations of the Cross. I also have a Planning a Trip section that will help you plan your mission journey.

I had an incredible time exploring the missions, and I hope you do too. Now take it away, Allison!



First: Mission San Fernando September 21, 2008



Last: Mission San Jose April 11, 2009

The Journey Begins

Hi, my name is Allison. I am in 4th grade, and I am part of the CDA. CDA stands for Child Detective Agency. It is sometimes called Child Detective Association, but I like agency more. The CDA is a group of kids who all share an interest in solving somewhat complicated mysteries. I just recently solved a mystery about a missing key that someone accidentally threw in the recycling bin. It was a gruesome job, but someone had to do it.

Now I am going to introduce the craziest brother on the planet. He is my partner in the CDA. He can take annoying to extremes, play bad, bad, practical jokes, and nearly make you cry from his knock – knock jokes. He’s Mark – my twin brother and personal noodlehead. I am just going to write that you would definitely not want to have him as a brother because he’s a *noodlehead*. *Noodlehead*. If I could explain how much I don’t care for him, this introduction would be thirty pages long. Sadly, he is my partner in this adventure. I guess that’s just life.

During spring break, Mark and I heard about the Search for the Golden Mission. We decided to search the California missions to find it. Mishie (a small wingless fairy/tour guide) guided us through the missions, and we sort of ended up finding it, but I don’t want to spoil the ending.

While we searched for the Golden Mission, we saw some really cool stuff. I wrote about my favorite things at the end of each chapter. They would make a great “I Spy” game when you tour the missions. Let the adventure begin!

One day, Mark and I were listening to the news because there was nothing better to do. I mean, almost all of Mark’s old toy cars were crashed, every board game we owned was way too boring, and Mom banned us from playing baseball, soccer, badminton, or any other fun thing in the house because we broke her favorite lamp. Well, what else was there to do?

Mark and I are twins, but, in my opinion, we shouldn't be. Mark is the perfect kind of boy, who never gets involved in anything bad. He says I'm weird, weird, goofy, off-task, abnormal, unpredictable, and weird. Since we just solved our latest mystery, we have nothing to do now. Maybe we could find a good case watching the news.

Suddenly, the anchorman said, "Coming up next, there seems to be a rebellion at Derwood High. Can the teachers solve the problem? And, The Search for the Golden Mission seems to be going on once again. Michelle Brooks is live with the story. All of this, right after the break."

"Did you hear that?" Mark said, smiling.

"Yeah. Why are you so interested in high school kids being mean?"

"No, The Search of the Golden Mission thing! That could be our new mystery!"

"You thought the thing about the toilet plungers was a mystery."

Mark rolled his eyes at me, but we didn't talk anymore. The news was back on.

First they showed the thing about the high school rebellion. After a while the news anchorman said, "Interesting wasn't it? Now, we're going to hear about The Search for the Golden Mission, a famous hunt for a model made of gold. It is a priceless treasure, having been undiscovered for years! But now, clues have been revealed, showing the Golden Mission may be at one of the twenty-one California Missions. Here's Michelle Brooks with how it all happened."

"We don't need to hear that," said Mark, shutting off the TV. "Now we have a new mystery to solve."

I nodded. "Let's go."

We were almost to the door when Mark said, "Wait, how'll we get there?"

"Me," said a small, high-pitched voice. "I'll fly you guys there."

"Aaaaaahhhhhhh!" I screamed.

"Shut your mouth! Mom's going to hear you, and then we'll get in trouble, you don't want us to be grounded again, do

you, of course you know there's got to be a logical explanation for this, even though I can't think of one right now, oh my gosh, what in the world is that?" Mark said this all so fast, it was hard for me to make out what he was talking about. But, I looked up because I heard the last part: "What in the world is that?"

A little female person was hovering in front of us, barely the size of my hand. She looked like a fairy, with no wings. She had brunette hair; all tied up in a high ponytail, very white teeth, and was wearing a dress all shades of green, obviously, made of tree leaves. On one foot, she had a green shoe also made of leaves. I couldn't see if she had a shoe on the other foot because the skirt was long on that side. Around her neck she wore a black string, with a single charm on it, a golden bell.

"Hi," she said. "I'm Mishie. What're your names?"

"Mark," Mark said awkwardly.

"My name is Allison. Mark and I are part of the CDA, the Child Detective Agency. I was wondering if you could help us in any way. Right now, we're about to head off to the first mission in California, wherever that is. We're searching for that Golden Mission thing. We heard it on the news. Do you have any idea where it is, or how we can get there?"

Mark gave me a very-well-said-but-you-shouldn't-talk-to-strangers-so-easily-look. But, I didn't care. I was waiting for Mishie's reply.

"Yes, that's my job. I can fly you from mission to mission, and guide you along as you search. Just ask if you need any information."

"Okay," I said. "I think we should start now. What's the first mission?"

"Mission Basilica San Diego de Alcala. You can just call it Mission San Diego."

"Do you have anything else to tell us?" Mark asked.

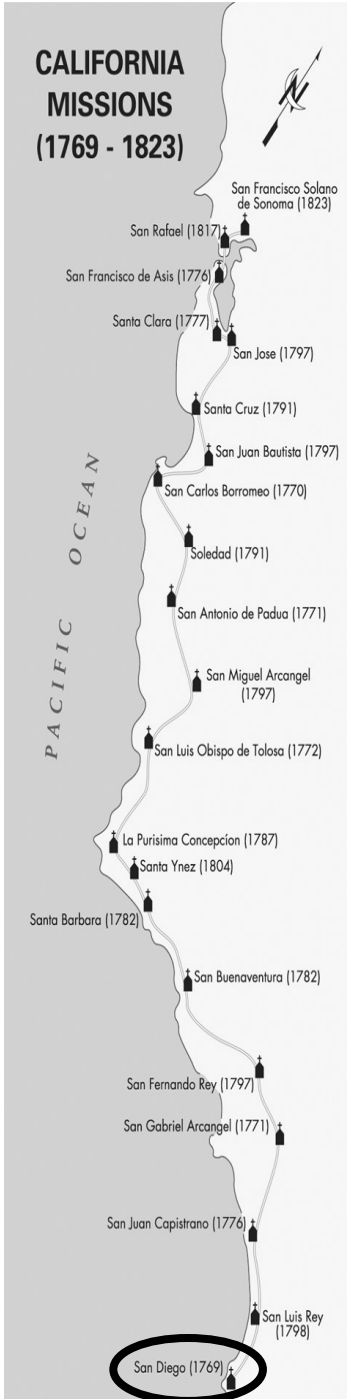
"Yes," said Mishie. "About the flying. This is how it goes. If you guys are near me, you'll be able to fly, but only if I want you to. If I don't want you to, you won't be able to do it, even if *you* want to. Got that? Okay. One more thing. I already

have our trip sort of planned. Your mom actually knows me, so if I leave a note saying where you guys went, it'll be okay. We'll do three missions a day, and have lunch... whenever we feel like it. Sound like a deal?"

"Yeah," Mark and I said in unison.

"Let's go." said Mishie, right after she wrote a note. It looked pretty funny because Mishie was, like, three inches shorter than the pencil.

We flew out the open door, and soon, I couldn't see the house. The three of us soared over houses and stores and schools and clinics and restaurants and apartments and public swimming pools. It was really awesome. I never believed people could fly without airplanes, or gliders, or something like that until now.



Mission
One
Mission
San Diego
de Alcalá
(Founded: 1769)
San Diego,
CA
**Mother of
the
Missions*



First Mission: Mission San Diego

After a short period of time, I looked down and saw a huge building with bells and all that stuff that makes a mission look like a mission.

“Land now,” Mishie told us. Amazingly, I could land. And I never had any flying practice!

Before long, we were on the ground right in front of Mission San Diego. In front of us were 40 steps. Mark, Mishie and I raced to the top. Mishie won, of course, because she was flying, but I beat Mark.

Mishie pointed out that after 5 years of operation, in 1774, this mission was moved here. It was moved because this location was closer to Indian Villages, had a reliable source of water, and good farming land.

We went into the gift shop, which was the entrance to the mission.

When we were at the counter, the lady said, “\$3.00 each please. If you want a tote-a-tape, that’d be \$5.00.”

“No,” Mishie laughed. “Mishie service.”

Whatever Mishie service is, it got us in for free. (No tax either!)

The lady smiled and told us we could enter. When we were outside, Mishie said the first place we should go was the Casa Del Padre Serra.

The Casa Del Padre Serra was the place where the priest (padre) of the mission lived. We got to go inside. There were two stories. On the first floor, there was a bed, a chair, a broom, and other items all crammed on one side of the room. The other side supplied nothing but a fireplace.

We were able to see the second floor from the first floor. To get up there, the priest would climb a rope ladder, and, before he slept, he would pull it up so bandits couldn’t reach him.

Next, Mark, Mishie and I passed an archeological site. No one was there, but it looked as if they were halfway through

digging up the *convento*, or friary. The friary was the place where the Franciscan missionaries lived while at the mission.

After that, the three of us walked down a hall with a big statue at the end. Next to the statue we noticed the fourteen Stations of the Cross. But, the pictures weren't painted. They were tile mosaics. I really liked them because they were colorful and looked a bit like stick figures.

The next place we went was the museum. The first display showed Indian tools and pots. The next one showed Indians' baskets. Farther down there was a mission bell. There was also a key, and lock, a plow, and horseshoe, a saw blade, and a door hinge that all belonged to Indians. In the next room there were framed models of all 21 missions glued to the wall. I liked looking at them because I saw the missions we'd be going to, and the one that we're at. I knew I might not see *all* of the missions, though, because we'd stop looking when we found the Golden Mission. There was also an original American flag, with thirteen stars representing the thirteen colonies.

When we had left the museum, we went into a chapel. It was like a small church. There were approximately 24 choir stalls in the chapel, all along the sides. It smelled musty, so Mark decided to be annoying and said, "Eww! I just realized that Allison didn't take a bath since last week! Now she stinks!"

"NO! It's you! Plus, I took a shower this morning!"

"Right," Mark rolled his eyes.

"I did!"

"I don't remember that..."

"I know why! Because you have a bad memory!"

"Who wins all the 'Memory' card games?"

"That's just your luck!"

"I see..." Mark rolled his eyes again.

I was about to say he was a noodlehead, and then I felt a small pinch on my arm.

"Come on, we're going someplace else." Mishie said. Outside, Mark, Mishie and I looked at a stove Indians used for cooking. It was shaped like a dome and had a square

Favorite Things at Mission San Diego

1. When the tour was finished, I got to help the **archeologists** try to **uncover artifacts**. You should really volunteer if they let you.
2. In front of the mission, there were **Patron Saint statues**. They were holding buildings that Mishie said were missions. I really like them.
3. Outside, in the garden, near the bell tower, there were these really neat **brick crosses** that had **leis** and other items similar to necklaces strung around them. Those crosses were really pretty.
4. Inside the museum, there were twenty-one **framed models** of the missions. Mishie pointed out the missions we'd be going to today, which made them extra special.
5. When I had almost left, I heard the sound of **bells**. I walked to the bell tower, and saw someone **ringing** them. The sound was loud, but wonderful. If possible, take time to listen to the bells.
6. In a hallway, there were the 14 **Station of the Cross**. But, they were **tile mosaics**, not paintings. The thing I liked about the tile mosaics was that they told the story of Jesus, without being bloody and frightening.

