

# Read a Book

By GothicDancer

Submitted: January 23, 2005

Updated: January 23, 2005

*This short story is basically about how some people forget about traditional ways when technology comes along.*

Provided by Fanart Central.

<http://www.fanart-central.net/stories/user/GothicDancer/10872/Read-Book>

**Chapter 1 - Books Exist**

**2**

# 1 - Books Exist

“This is the latest technology used today. This computer is guaranteed to load at least five times faster than the old one.”

Twelve-year-old Mika watched from the stairwell as her parents brought in the huge box containing the brand new family computer. She observed their movements with a frown and stood up from the fifth step. A sigh passed her lips.

“Aren't you excited, Mika?” her mother asked. “You'll be able to write out school reports and save them easily. This computer also comes with a large variety of different features including multimedia programs. Reports might actually be fun to do!”

“And you'll be able to chat with friends online now,” the father added. He set the huge box down on the floor and wiped the sweat from his forehead. He smiled and looked towards his daughter. “All your friends have this type of access to the Internet, right? You could talk to them while surfing the web.”

Mika did not respond. She simply hung her head low and walked to the top of the stairs. From there, she peeked over the end of the stairs and continued to watch. Her mother and father began walking the huge box to the office. She heard them finally set it down and begin to tear the many layers of tape off the cardboard.

Another sigh left Mika. She quietly walked to her room at the end of the hallway and shut the door behind her. The hinges made a strident squeaking sound, announcing their need for repair. Cringing back at what sounded like nails on a chalkboard, Mika stepped away and delicately sat on her bed.

Mika's room was prim and proper with lace hanging from the drapery and her bed comforter. Stuffed animals guarded shelves upon shelves of books. The walls were a soft pink that could make the most stressed person feel calm. The cleanliness convinced many that no one had ever stepped foot into the feminine paradise. Dust was absent from the area, and one could eat off the carpet without swallowing a single piece of lint. To keep the room constantly clean, Mika always took off her shoes and socks and left them in a laundry bin outside her doorway.

The sun shone through the window and bathed Mika and her stuffed friends in golden warmth. Mika turned her back away from the sunlight and closed her eyes. She slowly leaned back and fell on the pillows nearly invading her bed. The soft, fluffy fabric invited her to sleep, and she felt like accepting.

“Mika, come see the computer!” the mother called from outside, tapping on the door. Mika's eyes opened suddenly, and her body acted like that of a puppet. She sat up straight and turned her gaze to the door. Her mother entered without her permission.

Mika frowned furiously and looked at her mother's feet. She then turned her scowl directly into the woman's eyes, sending a chill up her spine. Without any more warnings, her mother kicked off her shoes

and tossed them in the laundry basket. Mika's scowl disappeared, and her traditional frown took up residence.

"Will you come see now?" her mother continued. "Everything is connected, and we're ready to access the Internet and explore what this brand new technology has to offer! Don't you think that's cool?"

Mika just shrugged. It made no difference to her. For all she cared, their new computer could have been a supercomputer only accessible to the most prestigious of scientists. She checked the other side of her bed and saw a thick book lying on the floor. She quickly picked it up and looked at the title; then she showed it to her mother.

"You've already read this book," her mother insisted. "Aren't you bored of it?" She looked at her daughter disapprovingly. Mika shook her head and stood up. Her mother joined her in shaking her head, and she placed the book on her daughter's desk. Mika's eyes widened and she ran over to place it on a shelf.

"For the love of Pete," her mother continued, "it's not the end of the world if one book is lying on your desk instead of on your shelf. Now come on, sweetheart. Daddy is going to show us how the computer functions."

Mika stood completely still for a minute before silently agreeing to see the technology at work. Her mother smiled and placed her shoes back on her feet. Before Mika joined her, she cast her stony gaze out the window. The sunlight was gone. A small gray cloud now hovered over her room and blocked her view of the outside world. Mika quietly sighed and reluctantly left her room.

"What do you think, Mika?" the father questioned. "Is this system cool or what? The Internet access is so much faster than the older computer. There'll be no more waiting around for Internet connections in this house!" He smiled joyfully and moved the cursor across the screen. He clicked on the games icon and brought a game of Solitaire up, ready for playing."

"Oh!" the mother gasped happily. "Does it have Hearts? I love playing Hearts. Is Minesweeper an available game, too? That game can be so much fun!"

"I don't know. Let's find out!"

Mika sat in the back of the office and watched her parents blissfully explore the computer. She sat in the large armchair and continued with her depressed frown. Her eyes caught sight of a book slightly peeking out from the office shelf, and she stood to place it back in its proper spot. Before she could, she took the book from the shelf and opened to the first page. She skimmed through the copyright and title pages before she came upon the actual story.

"Are you seeing this, Mika?" her mother cheered. "It's amazing! There's a whole section devoted just to homework help here without having to access the Internet! I didn't know these things were available these days." She turned and saw her daughter reading the book. Her face became confused.

“Why are you reading?” she continued. Her husband tore his eyes away from the screen and observed his daughter paying them no mind.

“That’s a really old book, Mika,” he explained. “Don’t tell me that you find it interesting.” Mika just nodded, her eyes never leaving the page.

Suddenly, the room’s light completely disappeared. Mika and her parents looked out the window and saw the clouds building up outside. They heard the powerful rainfall not far in the distance. The wind started to pick up until the clouds covered their neighborhood. The rain poured on top of the roof, and the water started to mist in their faces.

“Lock the windows!” the father shouted. “That’s one powerful storm! Where did it come from all of a sudden?” He ran to lock the latch on the window behind Mika. His wife ran upstairs to close all the windows, remembering that she had opened a few since the day was getting hot.

Mika closed the book and placed it back on the shelf. She then simply got up out of the chair and walked to the kitchen. She came back to the office a few minutes later with a flashlight in her hand.

“Okay, all the windows upstairs are closed and locked,” her mother announced, running back down the stairs. She breathed heavily and walked back into the office. She saw her daughter stand very calmly next to the computer. She also noticed the room was darker than she had left it. She gasped when she realized what had happened. Her husband joined her.

“Did the power go out?” he asked. Mika scowled and pointed to the computer. Her parents followed her finger until they saw the black screen. Their eyes widened in horror. Mika then brought her hand back to her side and turned on the flashlight. She pointed it to the computer and then to the bookshelf. She nodded at her father’s obvious question.

“We should have checked the weather channel’s website to see if a storm was going to come,” her mother stated, upset. “Instead, we were too busy playing games to even care. The clouds were building up earlier. I should have known.”

“Yeah,” Mika agreed, “you should have.”

Mika’s parents looked at their daughter. The flashlight was still pointed at the bookshelf. Her mother bit her lip and placed a frustrated expression upon her face.

“You’re right, sweetheart,” the father agreed. “Even if we didn’t check the website, we could have watched the weather report on TV this morning. Instead, we were out buying this.”

“That’s not what I mean,” Mika countered. “What I mean is that the newspaper was available this morning, too. I read it. It said there was going to be a storm today.”

“Why didn’t you tell us?”

“I thought you had read it, too. You read it every morning anyway. Or do you?”

Silence fell upon the family. Mika walked over to the shelf and took down three books. She then walked out of the office and left her parents in suspense. A few minutes later, she was back with two more flashlights. She handed each adult a book and a flashlight.

“The storm is going to pass in about an hour,” she stated. “Until then, why don't we have some family reading time?”

She smiled as her parents opened to the first few pages.