

An Unexpected Encounter

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Aged 11



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Chapter One: Running

Ezra's heart pounded vigorously in his chest, his lungs throbbing in agony, gasping for air.

He couldn't stop running.

Ezra darted and dodged through the trees, as fast as his legs would carry him.

Blundering and slipping, he fought his way through the thick undergrowth, determined.

He had to escape it.

But the nagging question was repeating over and over again: "What was it? Could he defeat it by himself?"

Ezra always did things by himself , and maybe that was his weakness. He pumped his legs up and down , ignoring the searing pain in his feet. He disregarded the dead, thin twigs and branches that rose up from the forest floor and scraped and scratched his ankles like slender, ghostly fingers.

As he bolted through the forest, it seemed as if it was pressing down on him from all sides, trying to trap him in its thorny clutches. It was now impossible to move quickly through the spidery tangles of trees, bushes, thorns and gnarled limbs. A ceiling of thick branches shut out all the light and covered the ground in darkness. The forest was a sinister, imposing labyrinth- impossible to navigate.

Chapter Two: Exhausted

Ezra wanted to go further, he knew that he needed to go further, but he couldn't. His legs felt like pieces of wood; stiff and heavy. Gasping for breath and panting, Ezra collapsed to the floor, dragged down by an irresistible urge to rest. Ezra was just about to let his eyelids flicker shut, and allow his head to loll against a knobbly tree trunk, when his conscience took control of his actions.

A loud voice shouted within him: " You have to keep on going. Stopping will only put you in grave danger !"

Ezra pulled himself to his feet, clinging to the tree for support - not yet defeated. He trudged slowly through the woods, each step causing him agony. Ezra carried on until a sharp-edged fence appeared in the distance. It grew bigger and bigger until he was right in front of it, pondering about how to clamber over it.

Ezra mustered up all of the strength left inside him and heaved himself up over the fence , then lowered his body down on the other side.

Chapter Three: The Graveyard

Row after row of granite tombstones were lined up perfectly like a sea of the dead. Behind them, spindly trees stood tall, their arms convoluted and bony, growing at odd, sprawling angles.

A certain eeriness hung in the air. The familiar church tower where Ezra had attended so many prayer services with his family appeared so life-deprived and empty, especially in

contrast to the place he had come every Sunday with his parents.

But that was before dad had died, now they rarely ever went to church. Life had changed since then.

Aggressive gusts of wind constantly came and slapped Ezra's face with such powerful impact that his face stung. Rain was now hammering down relentlessly and sudden streaks of lightning shot through the sky. It was obvious - a storm was brewing.



Chapter Four : The Truth

Screaming, Ezra felt a cold, shrivelled hand grab his shoulder.

He froze, rigid, paralysed with terror.

Ezra wanted to run, but his body refused stubbornly.

His heart was pounding, his pulse racing and his palms sweating .

Ezra stifled another blood-curdling yell .

He knew he had to look but he didn't want to face the truth.

Spinning round, he recognised a familiar face. Ezra's eyes widened in shock.

It was his dad. He had been running from his own deceased dad, all of this time.



Chapter Five : The Revelation

His face appeared pearlescent and ghostly, despite the absence of moonlight. His hair was tousled and wayward just as Ezra had remembered it . Stubble was growing on his chin, and his eyes seemed wild and shaken.

The pair stood staring at each other in the shadow of the imposing church tower, in a deafening silence, only interrupted by the hammering rain.

Ezra's mind went back to the nostalgic times they had spent together, playing in the park on the vivid green grass and the soaring swings. Then he thought about how those times were over now. And Ezra always did things by himself now.



Chapter Six : Advice

“You are not alone in this world, there are people you can rely on for support. Not everyone is against you , they are on your side.”

“When you heard my rustling in the bushes behind you , you assumed I was out to seek you, with dangerous intentions, so you ran for your life, but I was not”.

“I wanted to help you.”

Chapter Seven : Out of the Graveyard

“Come with me, I will show you the way out,” the ghost of his dad whispered eerily. Ezra followed him willingly , convinced that the ghost had pure intentions , like his dad had. They approached a gap in the thorny bushes that surrounded the graveyard, and his dad beckoned to him.

Ezra sidled carefully through the inconspicuous exit, avoiding the sharp brambles.

Ezra called his dad closer, but he shook his head wistfully. “ I cannot come with you , I am afraid. I am confined by an invisible force that separates the living and the dead. I am sorry.”

“Go home, quick, before the storm worsens.”

From that night on, Ezra learnt to trust others, and rely on them. Life was easier and more enjoyable that way , he soon understood.

We hope that you and your family and friends enjoy the book that you have created.

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SWITCHED ON!



EZRA WOKE UP THAT MORNING EXPECTING A NORMAL DAY AHEAD OF HIM. BUT THAT WAS NOT THE REALITY. PLACES AND PEOPLE THAT YOU KNOW SO WELL, CAN BECOME SINISTER AND UNWELCOMING IN JUST THE BLINK OF AN EYE. AND ENEMIES OFTEN ARE NOT WHAT YOU THINK THEY ARE.

