

## The forest

The rain was hitting the windshield angrily as the Sheriff's patrol car was driving down the steep mountainside. Little Steven was sitting in the back watching the Sheriff's gun wave forward and backward in his holster as they were driving over the muddy fire road. He was scared, really scared! But watching the gun's movement made him feel safe. Suddenly it hit again! The power of nature had struck again. Steven closed his eyes and tried to keep the thoughts from coming back, but it was too late, they were already there.

Steven was really excited as his dad told him about the plans he had made for the two of them. His Mom wouldn't be home, so his dad decided that they should go camping in the forest near the lake. So when the next day came and it was time to leave, Steven couldn't be held back. He was all excited and jumping around in his seat, constantly asking, when they would finally arrive, as they drove through the forest. It was a beautiful day, it was even so beautiful that the bumps in the road didn't even bother him. When they finally reached the clearing his dad had picked, Steven jumped out the car and immediately started exploring, but his dad called him back since he knew that bears were regularly seen in the area. That was also the reason why his Dad had brought his hunting rifle. As the sun set, Steven and his dad enjoyed precious father and son time by making a campfire, cooking some smores and grilling the fish that they had just caught with a fishing rod just made from materials found in the forest. But now it was time for little Steven to go to sleep. He had had an exhausting but wonderful day. As his father put him to sleep, Steven heard a cracking sound coming from deep inside the forest, when he told his father, his father answered: "No need to worry Steven your dad is right beside you and will always be, besides I got my rifle so the ghosts can try their luck". But deep down his father was worried.

A loud cracking sound followed by a silent "woooosh" and a violent impact disturbed the peace and quiet of the forest. It was a bear looking for food in the early morning, trying to climb up a dead tree to reach some honey. But the tree gave away under the load of the bear, falling to the forest floor. The green slightly damp forest floor now had a slight dent from where the tree had hit. But the ground had not only been dented, it had also been colored red, red by the blood of Stevens' father who was hit by the tree as he was sleeping. Steven who was just lying inches away was awoken by the mighty impact of the tree. As he woke up asking: "Dad what's going on?" he saw the thick clouds of rain above which were starting to worry him. But the clouds nearly didn't worry him as much when he turned his head to wake his father. He was shocked, he couldn't believe what he was seeing as he started to panic shouting: "Dad, Hey Dad, Dad, DAD!" he shifted to screaming for help but it was already too late. Steven started to feel dizzy he could feel his body drifting away from him as he passed out. He was awoken again as cold water hit his face, it was rain, heavy rain. Steven was confused and thought about his bad dream when he saw the splatter again. The shock went through his whole body reaching every nerve ending.

Now he was scared, really scared. But he didn't know what to do in this situation, he was only 12! His father would have known what to do! All he could think of was to start running. He ran and ran, getting soaked heavily by the rain falling from above. Due to him passing out it already started getting dark he couldn't see where he was going stumbling all over the place. The rain made him cold really cold, his whole body was shaking but all he could think about was his dad, still lying there on the ground. He ran and ran... By now three days had passed and a search party was dispatched. The Sheriff found him half dead in a ditch left by the ripped out roots of a fallen tree. It started to rain again.

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