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CHAPTER 1

Ricky Has a Plan

It was a hot summer day. Tom and Ricky were at Ricky's house. They didn't know what to do.

"It's so hot," Ricky said.

"No kidding," Tom said.

"What do you want to do?" Ricky asked.

"I don't want to go to the creek or ride bikes. I just want to sit here," Tom answered.

"Do you have your phone? Let's ask Dave and Eddie what they want to do," Ricky said.

"They went camping," Tom said.

"Camping? Where?" Ricky asked.

“They went to Bear Lake. I think they went there for a few days,” Tom said.

“Camping at Bear Lake? I bet it’s not this hot at the lake,” Ricky said.

“Do you want to go camping there?” Tom asked.

“Why not? Maybe we can go up there for a few days,” Ricky said.

“Maybe we will see Dave and Eddie,” Tom said.

“That’s a big lake, Tom. It will be hard to find them. Have you been there?” Ricky asked.

“No,” Tom said.

“My dad and I went camping there a lot. I am a good camper,” Ricky said.

“OK. It sounds good to me. Let’s go up there for a few days,” Tom said.

Just then Ricky’s mother got home from work. “Hi. Did you two have a good day?” she asked.

“Hi, Mom. We were just thinking about camping at Bear Lake,” Ricky said.

“You were?” she said.

“Yes. It’s too hot around here. We won’t need to take much. We’ll just take our sleeping bags, a tent, and some food,” Ricky said.

“And we can catch fish in the lake,” Tom said.

“It’s all right with me,” she said.

“That’s great,” Ricky said.

“But you should ask your dad. And, Tom, you should ask your mom and dad, too,” she said.

“I’ll ask Dad now,” Ricky said. He got out his phone and called his dad.

“He said it’s all right! Do you want to call your mom and dad, Tom?”

“Let’s go to my house and ask. Then I can get my sleeping bag, too,” Tom said.

They rode their bikes to Tom’s house.

Tom asked his mom and dad about camping.

His dad said, “I think it will be all right. When are you going?”

“Do you want to go in the morning?” Tom asked Ricky.

“That’s OK with me. Let’s go back to my house. We can make sure we have all the stuff we need for camping,” Ricky said.

They got on their bikes and went back to Ricky's house. Ricky's dad was home.

“Dad, Tom can go. We're going to pack all our things. We want to go in the morning,” Ricky said.

“How are you going to get there? The lake is five miles from here,” his dad said.

“Can you take us up there? There are no roads that go right to the camp site. We can hike to the camp site when we get there,” Ricky said.

“OK, I'll take you up there. I will pick you up in two days. Call me on your cell phone in the morning. Then I will know you and Tom are OK,” he said.

CHAPTER 2

The Camp Site

“Come on, Tom. We have a lot to do for the camping trip,” Ricky said.

They packed their sleeping bags and fishing gear. Ricky got his tent.

Tom got a pot and pan from his house. He also got some food.

Ricky said, “We may not need all that food. We’ll be fishing, too. We can eat the fish that we catch.”

“Let’s be safe. We might not catch any fish,” Tom said.

In the morning, Ricky's dad drove the boys to Bear Lake.

The lake was about five miles from town. It was up in the hills. There were lots of trees all around the lake. The camp site was about a mile away from the road.

“I'll pick you up here in two days. Get here by nine in the morning, OK? See you then,” Ricky's dad said.

The boys got out of the car. They got their camping things and waved to Ricky's dad.

They walked on a path. The path went down a hill. There were trees all around them.

“Do you know where we are going to camp?” Tom asked.



“We take this path. It goes to a camp site by the lake,” Ricky answered.

“I don’t think so. This lake is too big,” Ricky answered.

Tom saw an island in the lake. “Is there a house on that island? How do people get there?” he asked.

“That’s Bear Island. You need a boat to get to the island. No one lives there now. Only birds and animals live there,” Ricky answered.

“Let’s set up our camp,” Tom said.

“OK,” Ricky answered.

The boys found a place to camp. They set up the tent. They put their sleeping bags inside the tent.

“We have to start a fire so we can eat dinner. The fire can’t be near any trees,” Ricky said.

They found a place for the fire. They made a ring with some rocks. Then they made a fire in the middle of the ring.

CHAPTER 3

A Noise in the Night

The sky was dark. It was time to go to sleep.

Ricky put out the fire. “We have to be safe. There are a lot of trees here. We don’t want to start a fire in the woods,” he said.

Just then, Tom saw a flash of light.

“Look! I just saw a light on the island!” he said.

“I didn’t see any lights. Maybe it was just the moon shining on the water,” Ricky said.

The boys looked at the island for a while. They did not see any more lights.

“I’m sure that I saw a light come from the island,” Tom said.

Ricky answered, “I didn’t see any lights. Maybe you need sleep.”

“Maybe. But it did look like a light,” Tom said.

“There is no one around here,” Ricky said.

“Do you think it was Dave and Eddie?” Tom asked.

“No. There are no people on that island,” Ricky answered.

It was now very late. The woods around them were dark. The boys went inside the tent and went to sleep. The moon went in back of a hill, and there was no light.

Tom went to sleep. But Ricky could not sleep. He thought there was an animal outside the tent.

“Tom! Did you hear that? I hear an animal outside our tent!” he said.

Tom woke up. “What did you say?”

“I hear an animal out there. What do you think it is?” Ricky asked.

“I don’t hear any animals,” Tom said.

“There was a sound outside our tent. I think it was an animal,” Ricky said.

“Maybe we should get up and take a look around,” Tom said.

The two boys came out of the tent. Tom turned his flashlight on and shined it around. They did not see any animals.

“Dave? Eddie? Is that you?” Tom yelled.

“Come on. I don’t see animals, or Dave and Eddie,” Ricky said.

The boys went back into the tent. They got into their sleeping bags. But now Tom could not get back to sleep.

At last Tom said, “I think I’m getting sleepy.”

But then there was another sound. The boys sat up. “What’s that?” yelled Tom.

“It’s just rain. It’s the sound of rain on the tent,” Ricky said.

Soon the rain fell harder. But it was dry inside the tent.

“It’s a good thing we are inside this tent,” Ricky said to Tom.

“It’s really raining hard,” Tom said.

Tom was getting sleepy one more time. But then there was another sound. It was loud. It sounded like a big animal.

“That was not rain!” Ricky said.

“What was it?” Tom asked.

“It sounded like a bear!” Ricky answered.

“Are there any bears around here?” Tom asked.

“I don’t think so. There have not been any bears around here for years,” Ricky answered.

“Then why is it called Bear Lake?” Tom asked.

“It’s an old name. There were bears here then, but there are no bears now,” Ricky said.

“But you said the sound was like a bear,”

Tom said.

“Yes. It was,” Ricky answered.

“This trip just got a lot less fun,” Tom said.

The boys did not sleep. The rain was very loud. It rained all night.

CHAPTER 4

A Signal from the Island

In the morning the rain stopped.

“Maybe going camping was not such a good plan,” Tom said.

“Maybe not. Maybe we should go home,” Ricky answered.

They got up and went outside the tent. The ground was very wet.

“This is not fun. Let’s pack our stuff and go,” Tom said.

“I don’t think we can do that,” Ricky said.

“Why not?” Tom asked.

“Look,” Ricky said.

Ricky pointed near the trees. “Look over there. We had to cross a small creek to get here. But there was a lot of rain last night. Look at that creek now!” he said.

The creek was deep and wide. Water rushed down the creek. The boys could not cross the creek now.

“Let’s call your dad,” Tom said.

“We can’t. I forgot to charge my phone when I was at home, and my dad won’t be back for another day,” Ricky said.

“What do we do now?” Tom asked.

“We will have to wait for the creek to go down,” Ricky answered.

“And what about last night? You said there was a bear,” Tom said.

“Let’s not think about it. Let’s go fishing. Maybe we can catch some fish for dinner,” Ricky said.

The boys got out their fishing poles. They walked down to the lake and fished.

The morning was sunny. The sky was blue. Soon the boys felt good. They forgot about last night.

“Did you catch any fish?” Tom yelled out.

“No. How about you?” Ricky asked.

“Not one. Where are the fish?” Tom asked.

“They must be on the other side of the lake. Come on. Let’s go to the camp site,” Ricky said.

Just then Tom saw a flash. “Look! I just saw a light on the island,” he said to Ricky.

“I saw it, too!” Ricky said.

“What is it? What does it mean?” Tom asked.

“It looks like glass flashing in the sun. I think someone is on the island. Someone is trying to signal us,” Ricky said.

“Trying to signal us with a light? Why would they want to send a signal?” Tom asked.

“I don’t know. Maybe it is Eddie and Dave,” Ricky answered.

Then there was a loud sound in back of them.

“It’s the bear!” Tom said.