

# THE BADGE

"Dack Peck?" a voice called out. "Is that you?"

It was Mrs. Miller.

She saw him. He was sitting on the dock. She stood by her car. It was in the driveway. She began to walk toward him.

Dack jumped up. He was stuck. There was nowhere to go. What could he do?

Mrs. Miller stood by the lake. She was near the dock. "Dack Peck," she said. "What are you doing here?"

He could not speak. What could he say? Tell her about his dreams? Dreams about Tim. About the clues from those dreams. About breaking into her house. About finding Tim's ID. And now Tim's body. Would she believe him?

"What is that?" she asked.

Dack looked at the wet bag. "Nothing," he said. "Please, don't come out here."

"Why?" Mrs. Miller asked. She put her hands on her hips. "What do you mean?" She stepped onto the dock. "Tell me what that is," she said. "Tell me now. Or I'll call my husband."

“No! Please, don’t do that.”

Mrs. Miller walked toward Dack. She stepped over missing boards. “What’s wrong?” she asked. “Why won’t you tell me?” She reached him. “I want to know right now,” she said. “What are you doing here?”

Dack blocked the black bag.

“What is that, Dack?” she asked.

He wiped a tear from his eye. The police badge fell from his hand. Mrs. Miller picked it up.

“This is my husband’s badge,” she said.  
“He said he lost it. Where did you find it?”

“In the water,” Dack said. “Next to the dock.”

Mrs. Miller did not wait. She pushed Dack. He stepped back. She grabbed the top of the black bag.

“No! Wait!” Dack said. But he could not stop her.

Mrs. Miller looked inside the bag.

