

Murder in the woods

One foot after another was the only thought in my head. The rain was bucketing down as each foot stepped into a big puddle of brown water. The only light was from the moon as I trekked on into the darkness. The wind picked up, so did my pace. Trees started shaking with each gust almost as if they were waving hello to me. I shivered and took my phone out of my pocket to see the time, only to see a black screen. White lightning illuminated the sky and thunder rumbled overhead. I started to run, kicking up muddy water behind me. I was lost in the woods. I had to return back to the campsite but with each grumble of thunder and every flash of lightning, I was even more lost than before. I broke into a sprint, desperate to find my way back when I saw a black shadow run through the trees. I stopped dead in my tracks as the rain soaked me head to toe. *What was that*, I wondered. *Elle, your hallucinating, there's nothing there* said the little voice inside me, but part of me knew that something was.

I pushed the thought out of my mind and told myself to keep running. My whole body felt like collapsing into the mud and giving up then and there, but I knew I had to push on. My stomach growled and I realised that I hadn't eaten all day. I crossed my hands over my stomach, at this rate, I wouldn't be getting food till tomorrow morning. My lungs felt like they were about to explode and all I wanted to do was sit down in the rain, like I did my father. We would sit in the rain every day, waiting if there would ever be a rainbow. He would hold my hand tight, waiting for the rainbow to show itself. He was a genius. A scientist at one of the top universities. I missed him. I knew he was watching over me, trying his best to give me advice, I just couldn't hear it yet. I snapped out of my thoughts. I had to focus on surviving through the night. As if on cue, the rain got heavier. Suddenly, through my water filled eyes I saw a light ahead. A flickering orange fire with embers falling around it. It was a fireplace in a small cottage. Suddenly the burning flame was extinguished, and I felt a pit in my stomach. All hope was lost. I heard a quick snap and quite soon, the fire was back up and running, this time, it was bigger. I felt a flicker of hope ignite inside me and I broke into a full sprint. I couldn't see who lighted the fire, they were covered in the darkness and safety of the cabin. Maybe someone else was lost as well! I could spend the night here and return to my caravan tomorrow morning! I made my way over to the cabin and saw flickering embers through the window. My feet came to a halt. A hand wrapped around my mouth.

I felt like I was drowning in panic. My hands shook and a bolt ran down my spine as the hand tightened around my face. I heard a small whisper in my ear through the darkness of the rain.

"There's no-one to hear you scream." The voice was rough and male. His words shook me. He was right, there was no-one to hear me scream. I squeezed my eyes shut to stop the tears from coming out, but they still did. They mixed in with the rain. He led me inside the warmth of the cabin, keeping my hands behind my back the whole time. The door shut with a loud slam and I suddenly realised how creepy the cabin looked. It was filled with dust and cobwebs and the only glow was from the dim fireplace. There was a rusty, old table lying in

the middle of the room and the roof had big cracks all over it. The fear inside of me doubled and my body froze. He started leading me to a big crack in the wall, and with one hand he pushed right in the middle of it. A keypad appeared and he pushed his thumb on it. The door opened, and he led me down to the basement. My jaw dropped the floor. It was filled with pictures. Pictures of me.

I was stunned. My head was filled with so many questions. Why were there pictures of me? Who was this man trying to kidnap me? How did he get all these pictures?! I was in shock. I turned around, there was a cork board with pictures of me all over it. A red string connected all the pushpins and I wondered why I was the victim. What had I done? The rain was coming down harder and through the small gaps on the boarded window, I saw the trees violently shaking. In an old wooden frame, I saw a picture lying on a small rectangular table. It was a picture of my father. The man let go of my hands after shutting the door of the basement. I didn't dare run. The room was filled with dust and there was one dim light in the middle of the room. He turned and went to the cork board and placed another picture of me on it. He flipped around and looked me in the eye. My breath stopped.

"Martinez!" I exclaimed, "what... why?!"

"It's been a long time Elle, and I'm sure you have lots of questions, but I'm sorry, this is not a sweet reunion." Even more questions entered my head as my Martinez opened a small drawer in the table. Fear struck me like a lightning bolt, and I fell to the ground. Martinez was my dad's other half, his best friend.

"Martinez... are you going to kill me?" I fearfully questioned

"Look, Elle, I said this wasn't going to be a sappy reunion, I need your DNA to continue this research, it will help develop a better future." He towered above my head as I backed into a wall.

"Elle, you're immortal."

"What?!" I exclaimed.

"Elle," he sighed "I don't have time for examples, but I need you to cooperate, it's what your father would have wanted."

"What my father would have wanted!" I exclaimed, "I don't think my father would have wanted his best friend to kidnap his daughter and tell her she's immortal!"

"Elle remember the car accident, it was so bad, the ambulance thought that no-one would be alive, but you, you were. The doctors said it was a miracle for you to be alive, but you survived with and recovered extremely quickly." Talking about my father brought tears to my eyes. Was I really immortal?

"Look Elle, I know it's a big sacrifice, but to examine your DNA, we need to take it out, and that could possibly kill you, it's one of the only way I think an immortal person can die. This sacrifice could change our whole futures."

"I'm not going to do it," I said, "Do you know how many problems that will cause?!"

"Yes, but we will work our way around them, think about the lives you can save." A white spirit burst out of the air. It was my dad.

"Dad... how?!"

"Elle, I can't stay for long, but don't listen to him, he wants your immortality for himself, not for the world, I believe in you." He vanished into thin air. Strength filled my body knowing

that my dad believed in me. Martinez had shock written all over his face and I knew that was my chance, I got to my feet and thought quickly. Martinez was a fast thinker, but I was faster. I grabbed the photo frame of my dad and I smashed it across his face, he fell to the ground in pain holding his bloody nose. He quickly got back up, but I wasn't afraid. If my dad believed in me, then I believed in myself.

"Open the door."

"Never!" He said. I was worried that if I hurt Martinez too much, he might not have enough energy to open the door. I took out the photo of my dad and held it in front of him.

"Martinez, are you really going to betray him?!" I saw tears fill his eyes. I felt them fill mine too. He slowly walked to the walls and opened them revealing the rest of the cabin.

"Go, tell the cops I tried to murder you, I deserve to be in jail. Those were the last words I heard from him as I ran out into the storm. I was immortal after all.

News headlines:

Lost girl in the wood's barely escapes murder.