

Group 6

The Journey That Changed Us



It was a gloriously sunny morning last April when our teachers organized a school trip to the mystical Forest of Vikos. We were going to spend the night in the national park — a real camping adventure that had us buzzing with excitement for weeks. We gathered at school early, hurriedly loaded our bags onto the bus, and set off onto the open road, laughter and chatter filling every corner of the coach.

After an exhausting five-hour journey, we finally arrived at our destination as the golden afternoon light filtered through the treetops. We entered the national park, pitched our tents on a soft carpet of grass, and then ventured deeper into the woods for a hike along the legendary river of Voidomatis. The water was impossibly clear, almost glassy, reflecting the towering pines that lined its banks like silent guardians.

But as we marvelled at the scenery, a creeping unease began to settle over us. The sun had already dipped below the horizon, painting the sky in deep shades of purple and grey — and our teachers were nowhere to be seen. Panic surged through the group

immediately. We tried calling them frantically, but there was no signal whatsoever. We were utterly alone, swallowed by the vast, darkening wilderness.

The forest, once magical and inviting, had transformed into something sinister. Shadows stretched between the trees like grasping fingers, and every rustle of leaves, every distant snap of a branch, sent shivers racing down our spines. The chirping of unseen animals echoed around us, making the darkness feel alive and watchful.

To make matters worse, not everyone in our group got along. Weeks of tension and unspoken grudges hung heavily in the air — some classmates had not exchanged a single word in days. But faced with the cold reality of our situation, we understood that petty differences had no place here. Reluctantly at first, then with growing determination, we turned to one another. We nominated our class president as coordinator, and for the first time in a long while, our fractured little group became something stronger — a team with one shared purpose: to find a way out.

With the sun completely set and our entire class very scared we had no choice but to keep moving. Even with our class president leading us out of this very horrendous place we were still very uncertain whether we would get out of this place alive.

We moved fast and calculated, each foot placed mathematically predicted and all we still knew was that we were completely cooked. Eventually our legs started to show signs of immense fatigue, and our entire class came to the conclusion that we needed to camp out the night.

With the power of friendship, we had tents and all set-up ready to take on the epic night.

We got ready to have some rest and we lit a fire. We were resting at last when we suddenly heard footsteps. Someone had the courage to go and check. It was the teacher who had seen the light of the fire and found us.

During the night no one could sleep because they kept hearing screaming voices out in the forest and loud scraping sounds like someone was scraping the trees. Everyone was scared all night when they woke up. There were still no teachers, the students didn't know what to do, finally they came to the realisation that they needed food and water. So a group of five went into the forest. They were all scared but still went in. The oldest went up front to see some bushes with berries and decided to take them. They did not know if they were poisonous or not, so they brought them back. Another group went to the river. It was a steep climb down, but when they made it they took all the water they could carry. When both of the groups came back one of the smart kids checked if the berries were poisonous, they were not. In the night some people stayed awake while others slept. At around midnight almost everyone woke up and we heard some noise. Some kids screamed, others didn't talk but when we saw a shadow we were all scared. Then the shadow stood still and looked at the camp, then we saw who it was, one of our teachers who came back.

When we all got a good look at the teacher, we saw he was bleeding on his legs, arms, head and chest. It looked like he was attacked by someone or something. The teacher

needed some medical care. We had only one roll of bandages, so we tried to help him as much as we could. When we patched him up, he started talking about his story in the woods. He told us that the screaming we heard was him, and the scraping against the trees was the thing that attacked him. He said it looked part human and part animal, and it had long, sharp claws.

We all looked at each other in fear. Nobody spoke for a few seconds. Some students wanted to run, while others were too scared to move. Our class president told everyone to stay calm and stay close to the fire. The teacher said that whatever attacked him was afraid of light.

So we quickly put more wood on the fire and took our torches out. We all stayed together and made a circle. A few minutes later, we heard the strange noise again. It was coming from behind the trees. Then we saw two bright eyes staring at us from the darkness.

Some of us screamed, but the teacher shouted, “Don’t run!” We all pointed our torches at the trees and started making as much noise as we could. Suddenly, the creature moved away fast and disappeared into the forest. We never saw it clearly, and maybe that was better.

We stayed awake for the rest of the night. No one slept. When morning came, we heard people calling our names. It was our other teachers with some park rescuers. We had never felt so happy in our lives.

Later, they took us back to safety and helped the injured teacher. Nobody knew exactly what attacked him. Some people said it was just a wild animal, but deep inside, we were not so sure.

That trip to Vikos was the scariest night of our lives, but it also changed us. We learned how important friendship, teamwork and courage really are. After that night, our class became much closer, and we never forgot the journey that changed us.

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