

MYSTERY ADVENTURES FOR KIDS

Exciting Tales for Young Explorers

By Warren M. Rice

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THE STRANGE NIGHT

I was traveling down a very dark and lonely country road. I was tired from driving all day, and sleep was an absolute must. The danger of

driving any farther would surely bring death without mercy. I needed to find a place to stay alive.

Then, from out of nowhere, I saw a house on the side of the road. I stopped the car, got out, and walked up to the front door. It was about midnight, and I could see a light through the window, so I knocked. Not knowing who would answer—or if anyone would even bother—I could only hope that sleep was in my near future.

With heavy eyes, I waited impatiently. Finally, the door opened. A man with a long red beard, wearing blue jeans held up with suspenders, stood before me. Inside, I could see a gun case full of shotguns and two German shepherds sleeping beside a blue recliner.

In a rugged, dry voice, he said, “Who are you, and what do you want?”

I tried to hide my anxiety. Why didn’t I just sleep in my car? “My name is Kyle Denny,” I said.

“I’ve been driving all day, and I need a place to sleep. Would you happen to have a room I could rent for the night? There are no motels for miles.”

“The only thing I can offer you is a room in the

barn behind the house,” he said.

“Fine, I’ll take it.”

The bearded man led me to the barn. The room was dusty, with a small cot and not much light, but it seemed to say, *Come in and sleep*.

“This room will be just fine,” I said.

“Sleep well. And by the way, my name is Chad Quest. Before I leave, I must warn you—do not open that door over there. It must remain closed.”

He said good night and headed back to his house.

At last, sleep was about to become one with my mind, body, and soul. I drifted off—until I heard a peculiar sound repeating over and over, like a voice trying to say something. Maybe I was dreaming. Maybe I was just overly tired. But it continued.

It was coming from behind the door—the one Chad told me not to open.

The sound grew louder. It sounded like an animal crying in pain. I had to find out. I got up, turned on the light, and walked toward the door. Just as I reached for the knob, I heard a knock outside the barn.

It was Chad.

“I came to see if you needed anything,” he said. Then he saw my hand on the doorknob and shouted, “Stop! Do not open that door!”

“I heard something in there,” I said. “Something crying like a hurt animal. I just wanted to see what it was.”

“Very well,” he said. “I’ll show you.”

He opened the door and turned on the light.

What I saw startled me. I was filled with fear.

“What is it?” I gasped.

Chad assured me everything would be fine as long as I didn’t touch it. “Just leave it alone and go back to bed.”

I lay down, but sleep was impossible. The crying started again. Chad’s house was dark—he had gone to bed. The sounds continued, drawing me to the forbidden door.

I opened it, turned on the light, and there it was, looking straight at me: a twelve-foot gorilla in a cage. He reached his hand through the bars as if to say, *Touch me, please*. There was a sad look in his eyes.

I reminded myself of Chad’s warning. *Do not touch it.*

But I had to comfort him. I reached out and touched his hand.

He let out a long growl and began bending and breaking the bars of the cage.

This was not what I expected.

I turned off the light, shut the door, and ran. I sprinted toward the cornfield, hoping to hide. He followed me. I could hear his growls growing louder. I couldn't see him in the dark, but I knew he was gaining on me.

Suddenly, I tripped and fell. In the moonlight, I saw the massive creature hovering over me. Was this the end?

I sat with my head in my hands, waiting for the final moment.

I felt his breath.

Then he touched me and said, "YOU'RE IT!" and ran back toward the barn.

All he wanted to do was play tag.

What a night.

THE END

THE HOUSE ON THE HILL

It was getting dark in the woods where we hiked. The tall maple trees had thick branches that blocked the light, and bushes grew everywhere. We had started our hike around noon, thinking we were ready for a night of camping. But we didn't expect the sudden rainstorm with loud thunder. We needed to find shelter fast before the rain started.

As we walked carefully through the bushes, we found a clearing where the trees were taller and not so close together. Scott, the oldest among us, decided he would climb a big tree to look for a way out. We all agreed it was a good idea.

When Scott climbed down, he said he had seen a house on a hill with a light in one of its windows.

We thought it would be best to go there and hope to call for help. But as we started walking toward it, the thunder grew louder, and we needed to hurry.

We jogged toward the house. It wasn't far now—a big front porch, a warm light still shining. The rain began falling harder, and we reached the porch just in time to stay dry. The rain sounded like bowling balls rolling across the sky.

Once we were safe, we wanted to see if someone was home so we could let our families know where we were. We knocked on the door, but nobody answered. To our surprise, the door wasn't locked. We quietly opened it and looked inside with our flashlights.

Suddenly, the lights turned on, revealing a messy house filled with cobwebs and dirty dishes on the table and in the sink. The house felt strange, like something from an old movie, and we wished we hadn't come in.

We found a phone, but it didn't work, so we decided to go upstairs. As we began climbing the stairs, we heard a strange rattling noise from above. At the top was a long hallway with six doors—three on each side. We didn't know which door the noise was coming from, but we

needed to find out.

I felt nervous and thought maybe we should leave, but Scott opened the first door.

I was so scared...

...and then I woke up.

It was just a nightmare! Maybe it was the broccoli I ate before bedtime.

THE END

GONE CAMPING

Going camping had been in the planning stage for weeks. We didn't have a tent, so we took seven or eight old blankets, food, a flashlight, and a BB gun. We brought the BB gun just in case we met a bear—or maybe even a mysterious UFO. None of us really thought that would happen, but we didn't want to take any chances. I brought my special-edition Red Ryder BB gun I got last Christmas to scare away anything that might come too close.

The four of us started walking down the rugged dirt road in front of my house. The road curved around the cemetery caretaker's home. We walked past the creek behind the cemetery, crossed the Salt Creek bridge, and went through thick woods filled with squirrels and chipmunks

nesting in the trees.

Finally, we arrived at a clear plateau. After walking for two hours with our backpacks, we reached our campsite. Finding the perfect spot wasn't hard—we already knew where we wanted to stay. About five miles from my house was a place where my dad and I had picked blackberries many times. There was an old, abandoned coal mine nearby, with a flat clearing and a small dirt hill in front of it. Blackberry bushes grew all around.

From the little hill in front of the mine, we could see my hometown through the binoculars we brought. The rooftops, streets—even the caretaker's house—looked tiny from up there. With the binoculars, it felt like we were on top of the world.

We stretched a clothesline between two trees and hung up the blankets with clothespins to make our tent. Then we stretched out the other ends of the blankets and hammered pointed sticks into the ground to hold them down. Next, we gathered a dozen or so branches and placed them around the tent so we would hear if any wild animals came close. Our A-frame shelter looked really cool.

After all our hard work, we made a campfire and cooked hot dogs and marshmallows. We sat around the fire, telling ghost stories and having the best time of our lives. As the sky turned deep blue and stars began to shine brightly, a large, almost see-through spot glowed softly in the clear night sky. We all sat on the ground, talking and enjoying the peaceful night.

Around midnight, my head began to wobble, and my eyes bobbed. I was getting sleepy, so I crawled into the tent and fell asleep, snug and warm under a blanket. The others stayed outside, watching shadows move and listening carefully for any strange sounds—maybe a creature creeping quietly nearby.

I slept soundly in our little shelter. Later, the boys came inside the tent to sleep too. I woke up for a moment when they climbed in, then drifted back to sleep.

Not long after, the boys shook me awake.

“We heard something outside the tent,” they whispered. “We’re going home.”

They sounded serious—and a little scared.

So we quickly took down the tent, packed our things, and started walking back down the dark

dirt road. Since one of the boys was the caretaker's son, we went to his house and slept the rest of the night in the old shack beside his home near the cemetery.

About a week later, my uncle came from Ohio. He was going hunting and took me along. We went back to the same place where I had camped. I was surprised when my uncle showed me fresh bobcat tracks right where our tent had been.

Maybe the boys really did hear something outside the tent. I guess I'll never know for sure—but I'm glad we didn't stay there all night.

THE END

A FISH STORY

The day was warm, the sky blue, and the water clear. It was a wonderful day for fishing. There I was in my boat on the lake, happy as could be,

waiting to catch the big one.

Suddenly, I felt a tug on my pole. I began reeling in what I thought was the biggest fish I had ever seen. I pulled hard, but the fish on my line did not want to be caught. Finally, after an hour or so, I pulled him in.

This fish was definitely not your everyday, ordinary eating fish.

This fish could talk.

It was unbelievable to hear a fish speak. No way could this be true, I thought. But it was. And not only could he talk—he could grant wishes. Three of them. Anything I wanted.

“Please put me back in the water, and I will grant you three wishes,” he said.

“I don’t believe you,” I replied.

“Try me, and you will see that I speak the truth,” he said. “If I grant your first wish right now, will you put me back in the water?”

“Agreed,” I said.

I thought for a moment. “I wish my boat were a yacht.”

Instantly, my boat became a yacht.

“Wow! This is amazing! But how do I get my other wishes once I release you?”

The fish replied, “Just say, ‘I wish...’ or ‘We wish...’ and you will have it instantly.”

With that, I slipped him back into the water and raced home to tell my wife. Of course, she thought I was telling her another fish story. So I told her to look outside.

“I can’t believe my eyes,” she said. “But it’s true!”

“We must choose our last two wishes carefully,” I told her.

We thought about it and decided to wish for a motor home that could fly through the air and float on the water—**and** a million dollars—so we could travel the world. We wished it as one wish.

Instantly, a big, beautiful motor home appeared outside the house. And when we called the bank, the money was there.

The next day, we began our trip. When we came to water, we floated across. When we came to traffic, we flew right over. We were having a wonderful time.

A little while later, we turned on the radio. A

commercial began playing—a familiar jingle we both knew. Without thinking, we sang along:

“Oh, I wish I were an Oscar Mayer Wiener...”

“Oh, **we** wish we were an Oscar Mayer Wiener...”

Instantly...

We got our last wish.

Now *that* is a fish story like no other.

Don’t you think?

THE END

MOM KNOWS BEST

One day, when I was just a little girl, my family

and I moved to a new town. I was all dressed up and ready for school. I had on a lovely new dress and shoes that sparkled. Our house was a farmhouse with a huge backyard, and I even had my very own pony. She was all white, and I could ride her by myself. A white picket fence went around the yard, and beyond it was a field that stretched all the way to town.

Today was my first day at my new school. The field behind our house was a shortcut—only a thirty-minute walk—but my mom said, “I don’t want you to go to school that way. I heard that some mean boys play bad games there, and I don’t want you to get hurt. You must walk to school down the sidewalk through town.”

So I walked the long way and arrived an hour later.

At school, I sat at my desk all day thinking about my pony. If I went home through the field, I could get home thirty minutes earlier, ride my pony, and my mom would never know. After school, I walked through the field, slowly, hoping not to meet any mean boys. When I reached the backyard, I opened the gate, rode my pony for about ten minutes, then walked to the front door.

“Hi, Mom,” I said.

The next day, I thought about my pony again. Nothing happened yesterday. Maybe Mommy was wrong. So I walked through the field again. This time, I got home even earlier and rode my pony longer.

“Hi, Mom,” I said.

At school the next day, I thought, *If I hurry home, I can ride even longer.* Mommy must be wrong—I hadn’t seen any mean boys.

Each day, walking through the field, I would occasionally look over my shoulder to see if anyone was following me. Not once did I see anyone. So I walked faster and faster.

Then one day, suddenly, some boys came out from behind the trees. They were right in front of me. They started playing dodgeball—but they didn’t have a ball.

They had rocks.

And I had to walk right past them to get home.

Slowly, I walked by, hoping they wouldn’t notice me. But as I passed, they turned toward me and began throwing rocks. I ran, but they surrounded me. I slipped and fell, tearing my dress. Then one of the rocks hit me in the throat—right in my voice box.

I lay on the ground as still as I could, pretending to be dead. The boys were terrified. One said, "I'll go get help," but the others said, "She lives not far from here." So they carried me to my house.

My mom and dad rushed me to the doctor. I was hurt badly. The doctor said my voice box was damaged and I would never talk again.

The following Sunday at church, the preacher spoke about obeying those in authority, the consequences of disobedience, and God's forgiveness. After church, he asked my mom how I lost my voice.

"She disobeyed me," my mom said, "and she was hit with a rock."

The preacher knelt beside me. "God loves you," he said. "If you pray and ask God to forgive you, He will." Then he asked, "Have you prayed?"

I shook my head.

"Why not do it now?"

I bowed my head and prayed. My lips moved silently. When I finished, I said, "Amen."

Out loud.

God gave me my voice back.

I asked my mom to forgive me too. And the boys who had thrown rocks stopped playing bad games and started coming to church. We all learned a valuable lesson about forgiveness and obedience.

Most of all, I learned that **Mom knows best.**

THE END

THE CAVE

Hi, my name is Tyler, and my brother's name is Joe. Joe is eight years old, and I am ten. My family and I moved to a new home along the shore of Northern California. There are many caves in the cliffs along the shore and lots of seashells to find in the sand by the ocean.

Today was our first day in our new home. Dad said, "You can go outside and play—just don't go inside any caves." He told us that pirates might have buried treasure in some of them, but we should wait for him before going inside. As we walked out the door, Mom added, "Don't be late for supper."

We walked down to the beach to play. Joe liked to dig in the sand, so he always carried a spoon in his back pocket. I wasn't interested in digging—I wanted to find buried treasure.

It was a bright, sunny, warm day in the middle of summer. Joe was digging in the sand while I looked up at the cliffs, hoping to spot a cave. Then I saw one.

“Joe, look! There’s a cave in the cliffs. Let’s go see it.”

“No,” Joe said. “Dad told us not to go into any caves.”

“Well, we can just look a little, can’t we?” I said.

Joe followed me toward the cave.

The entrance was large and dark. I shined my flashlight inside but couldn’t see very far. “Let’s go in and see what’s inside,” I said.

“No,” Joe repeated. “Dad said not to.”

“Well, we can go just a little,” I said.

This time, I followed Joe inside.

It wasn’t far to a large room filled with stalactites hanging from the ceiling and stalagmites rising from the floor. The ice-like formations were long and shiny. I remembered reading at school that

you could play music on cave ice.

“Joe, get your spoon out and see if you can play a song,” I said.

Joe tapped the ice with his spoon, and it made a beautiful ringing sound. We laughed and played, having the best time of our lives. We forgot all about the time.

Then I suddenly remembered supper.

“We need to go home!” I said.

We looked around for the entrance—but there were four openings.

“Which way do we go?” Joe asked.

“I don’t know.”

Joe began to cry. “We’re lost! We’re going to die in here!”

“No, we’re not,” I said. “We just have to think.”

“How? I don’t know what to do!”

“Maybe we should pray,” Joe said.

So we prayed and asked God to help us.

After praying, I remembered something my Sunday school teacher said. I had memorized a verse: *‘For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.’* Suddenly, I

understood what it meant. Being lost in this cave was like being lost in sin—and Jesus was looking for me.

Right there in the cave, I prayed, “Lord Jesus, I know I am lost because of my sins. Please come into my heart and save me.”

“Me too,” Joe said. “Lord Jesus, please come into my heart and save me.”

We both prayed that day.

Then I remembered another verse: *‘The joy of the Lord is your strength.’* My teacher said strength could also mean courage. Maybe if we sang, God would help us.

So we sat on the cave floor and sang, “The joy of the Lord is my strength.”

As we sang, we heard footsteps.

“Boys! Boys, where are you?” It was Dad.

He had heard us singing and came inside to find us.

When we got home, supper was reheated. Mom and Dad weren’t very happy. Neither of us felt like eating. After Dad prayed, we sat quietly.

“Dad,” I said, “I’m sorry for disobeying you. I thought I’d find treasure, but we just got lost.”

“Well,” Dad said, “I hope you boys learned a lesson.”

“I did,” I said. “And I learned something else too. When we were in the cave, I realized I was lost in sin. I asked Jesus to save me.”

“Me too,” Joe said.

Dad smiled. “Then you boys really did find treasure—the greatest treasure in the world is knowing Jesus.”

We learned a lesson we will never forget. That’s the only treasure we really need.

P.S. Dad took us back to the cave the next week, and we had a fun time.

THE END

FOUR SEEDS

Sitting on the front porch on a Saturday out in the country, with nothing to do, is not much fun. My name is Shad, and my sister, Quincy, was sick with the measles and couldn't come out to play or do anything with me. So there I sat, feeling sad and bored. We lived about half a mile from the nearest town, and our friends on the other farms were too far away to walk for a visit.

I was just about to go inside when Mom came out and sat beside me.

"Shad," she said, "have you prayed and asked

God to help you find something to do?”

“No,” I said, “but I will right now.”

I bowed my head. “Dear God, please help me find a way to help my sister feel better and give me something to do. Thank You. Amen.”

“Well,” Mom asked, “what will you do?”

“I’ll go to my bedroom and see if I have any money in my piggy bank. Then I’ll go into town and buy something for Quincy to help her feel better. That’s what I think God is telling me to do.”

“That’s a great idea,” Mom said.

I ran to my room and opened my piggy bank. To my surprise, I only had five cents.

“I can’t buy anything with a nickel,” I said.

“God, I don’t see how this will help my sister, but I’ll go anyway.”

“Mom, I’m leaving for town now,” I said.

“Okay,” she replied. “Have fun.”

Our town was small, with only one store. People went there for everything. I walked inside and looked around at all the shelves. The store owner came over.

“Can I help you?” he asked.

I hung my head. “My sister is sick, and I wanted to buy her something to make her feel better. I prayed and asked God what to do, and He told me to buy her something. But I only have five cents.”

“Well,” the store owner said, “if God told you there’s something here, then there must be something here.”

He walked to the far corner of the store, slid a ladder over, climbed up, and pulled down a small box.

“I think this is what you want,” he said.

He opened the box and handed me a package of five seeds.

“What is this?” I asked. “How can seeds make my sister feel better?”

“These aren’t just seeds,” he said. “They’re special seeds.”

I took the seeds home, planted them in a pot of dirt, and placed the pot on Quincy’s dresser. Then I sat beside her bed, and we stared at the pot, waiting for something to happen.

Nothing happened that day.

Mom called me to bed, so I went to my room for the night.

The next morning, Quincy and I were surprised to see that one of the seeds had grown into a vine shaped like the letter **L**.

We watched the pot all day, but nothing else happened.

The next morning, another vine had grown—this one shaped like an **O**.

Every day, a new vine appeared, each forming a letter. By the end of the week, all the seeds had sprouted, spelling the word:

LOVE

Quincy felt better now, and we both went outside to play.

THE END

HOW KISMET FOUND A NEW FRIEND

There were two boys named Squall and Kismet who lived in two villages deep in the African

jungle, separated by a big river and tall trees. Squall's name meant "Bad Weather" because it was stormy the day he was born. Kismet's name meant "Bad Luck" because of an injury he suffered as a child. Their villages were very different from each other.

In Kismet's village, the people learned about the Bible from a kind missionary. They discovered the teachings of Jesus Christ, which taught them about love, peace, and freedom from sin. Kismet loved these teachings and wanted to share them with Squall, who lived in the other village.

Squall's village, however, was filled with fear and superstition. The people believed that spirits controlled the weather and caused bad things to happen. This fear shaped their daily lives. Kismet wanted Squall to know that there was joy and freedom in believing in Jesus Christ.

Every time they met near the river, Kismet invited Squall to visit his village and hear the missionary teach. The missionary came every day, sharing Bible stories and inviting people to trust Jesus for salvation. But Squall was afraid of Kismet. His village leader had warned him that talking to Kismet could attract evil spirits—just like the accident that hurt Kismet's leg. So Squall

avoided him, even though he noticed how happy Kismet always seemed.

One day, Squall decided to be brave. He wanted to hear the missionary for himself. He planned to sneak out of his village when everyone was busy. At three in the afternoon, during a quiet time, he tiptoed through the jungle until he reached Kismet's village. He climbed a tree near the gathering place and listened from above.

Every day he returned, listening to stories about how God created the world and how Jesus came to save people from their sins. The missionary invited everyone to ask Jesus into their hearts.

One day, Squall climbed down from the tree, walked up to the missionary, and prayed to accept Jesus Christ as his Savior.

With the missionary's help, Squall and Kismet became best friends. Together, they began sharing the message of Jesus with others. Many people in both villages believed because of their friendship and courage.

Squall no longer wanted to be called "Bad Weather." He chose a new name—**Ozias**, or **Ozzie**, which means *God is my strength*. Kismet changed his name to **Edward**, which means *Gift*

of God.

Together, they felt strong, joyful, and full of hope.

THE END

THE LEGEND OF FALLING ROCKS

The chief was caught in a fierce competition with two braves, Running Bear and Falling Rocks. The prize they both sought was the chief's daughter, a vision of beauty and kindness. The chief would decide which brave would marry her and become the next chief.

To determine the winner, they embarked on a hunting party, a traditional test of skill and courage. The party ventured into the snow-covered wilderness, a sacred part of the tribe's customs for generations. The chief promised that whoever returned with the

best and most game would win the hand of his daughter.

The village waited for their return day after day, week after week. The snow deepened, and the wind blew hard. Survival was almost impossible. Many in the village fell ill and died due to the cold weather. Some animals lay in the snow dead for the entire winter.

After ten months, Running Bear returned with 16 deer, 20 rabbits, and three bears. The village celebrated, but Falling Rocks had not returned. The village waited another six months. Finally, a search party went to look for him, but they returned without success.

Running Bear married the chief's daughter and became the new chief.

The search for Falling Rocks did not stop. The other braves continued searching for another year. Today, when driving along the mountainside, in many places, you will see a sign that says, "***Watch out for Falling Rocks.***" The search is still ongoing today.

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