

The Explorer

As the four of them silently walked through the dense, humid forest, Fred, who was walking in front, suddenly came to a halt. Looking puzzled, Lila asked, "Hey! Why'd you stop?" The others peeked over to see what was wrong.

"It's a dead end," Fred mumbled, worry in his eyes. He was right. The edge of the forest was right in front of them, rocky and leading down to a high, deadly fall into a shallow water stream. But as Lila started to panic, Max noticed that in the distance, an old, muddy rope stretched from their side to the other.

"Hey! You three, look!" he yelled, pointing at the motionless rope and trying to get their reaction. They all turned around to face him.

"So what?" Con glared at him, "We can't do anything with it!" Fred picked up a long, thick vine and showed them.

"We can, actually. If we tie the vine onto the rope, we can use it as a zipline to get across!" He looked hopeful, thinking of himself as a genius.

Con chuckled. "You're joking, right?" she sniggered. Fred just stood there.

"No! Definitely not!" she shouted, "What if we fall?"

"Come on...it won't be that bad!" Fred insisted.

"No!" Con shouted again.

"I can't believe you're making us do this," Con whined furiously. Fred rolled his eyes and made a knot with the vine. Then he hung onto the rope and without looking back, stepped off from the edge. Lila gasped as her mind whizzed around all of the bad things that could happen. Before they knew it, to their surprise, Fred was already waving to them from the half-way bridge.

"He actually did it!" Lila whined.

"Yeah, yeah, whatever," Con muttered. Now everyone was across except from Con.

"Hey! Don't leave me behind!" she yelled.

Well come across then!" Fred was getting annoyed.

"Fine," she sighed and stepped off. As she glided across though, one of her hands slipped. Con let out an ear-piercing scream. "Help, Help! I'm gonna fall!" she whimpered.

"Try to hold the rope! Get a grip!" Fred shouted. Con kicked her legs in panic.

"Come on," Fred commanded. Finally, she took hold of the rough rope and slid to the other side.

"You! Your dumb idea almost killed me!" She pointed a trembling finger in Fred's face.

"Hey, chill. It isn't my fault your hand slipped," Fred shrugged.

"Ugh!"

Fred turned around and went on strolling through the dense forest. The others followed. It was getting darker. But in the distance, through the bushes, streaks of light peeked.

“Guys! I see light!” Lila sighed in relief. They walked around as twigs crumpled under their feet. In front of them appeared an empty, abandoned looking house.

“Let’s go in!” Lila cried. “Maybe there’s food!”

“What if there is someone in there?” Con blurted out.

“Let’s just go in!” Fred said and climbed up the steps. The other three followed his path. Fred took hold of the door handle and luckily, the door wasn’t even locked. As they stepped in, a faint smell of dust surrounded them and the floorboards creaked. As Lila looked around, she noticed a pile of food and announced, “Guys! There’s food here! Yes!” Everyone ran towards the stack of delight and started munching as a sense of relief poured down their bodies.

“This is heaven...” Con sighed.

“Just eat and let’s get out of here before anyone comes,” Fred said sternly. But just as they ate, they heard footsteps coming down the stairs.

Lila whispered, “Oh no.”