

Once in a lifetime

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I waited in the bland doctors' waiting room alone tapping my fingers on the book Dad gave me to read while I waited for him to be done. The muffled voices were quieter than ever under the sound of the noise maker just to make sure nobody could hear any private conversations. My mind danced around as if waiting for something to happen.

My mind whipped me up from my chair and swept me far away. I opened my eyes to find a soft, sweet breeze kissing my face and the soft sand hugging my feet. All I knew was that I wasn't anywhere near the bustling traffic of the dirty heart of town. I looked down to find Dad's book resting on the sand in front of me. Words appeared on the cover that once were, *The Intriguing World of Concrete* and now were, *Jungle Survival Guide 2022 By Robert Smith*. In front of me were dense trees and twisting vines. One step forward. More trees grew and birds of all colours sang in a sweet harmony. One more step forward and flowers bloomed and vines swept me into the dense forest. My book rested under my arm. I opened it to find blank pages. *Blank pages?*

I walked on with leaves crackling under my boots; an array of colours before me. I suddenly felt over dressed for a tropical island. *Ouch!* I tripped over a particularly twindly tree root. I didn't stare down at my knee until I felt a trickling pain rushing down my leg; a cut too big to be bandaged by any tropical leaf. I had to get home. As dirty or bustling the city was, I needed it more than ever now. I missed the forever lingering reek of garbage for the first time. I lay down on the soft leaves as if praying for someone to come to my rescue. I always dreamed of adventure like my favourite book characters would go on, but I never quite got how terrifying it would be.

I opened the book and magically, it had fancy writing that read, *Chapter 1: How to treat a cut*. I kept flipping through the pages that had been ripped and torn by people before me. *But just how?*

A growl. I didn't know where or what it came from but for some reason, I had the instinct to run. I shot along the forest path, making the track myself, kicking the dust up as I went along. One more growl but this time I felt the warm breath of the beast on my face. Whatever it was, it was near. I jumped into a nearby pile of Autumn leaves. My thumping heart and fast breath was the only noise fading to the twilight. I pulled out the book. The next chapter appeared. It read, *Chapter 2: The beast of Beverly Island*. I read on. *The Beverly Wolf; a short, plump*

creature that growls and howls as the clocks strike twilight and the sun starts to set. I looked out to see if that creature chasing me was still there. It was, and it was sitting gracefully on a rock. It was short, plump and howled into the night sky. Was that the Beverly Wolf? I read on. *It is known to rest itself gracefully on a rock.*

It was, in fact, a Beverly Wolf! I ran off into the evening wondering what I would see next.

"Bea, I've finished! The doctor said the headache was just a passing thing after all!"

The voice was strangely familiar to one I had heard before. I pinched myself and woke up from the distant land of Beverly Island.

When Dad and I were walking home to our terrace house in the heart of our dirty, bustling city, Dad stared into the night with a twinkle in his eyes.

"You know, Bea, once when I was about your age, I had this magical dream that I was on an island called Beverly Island or something. Whenever I see the twilight as beautiful as it is tonight, I always remember it as the greatest experience of my lifetime." Dad spoke softly.

Could this be? All I knew was that this day was one in a lifetime.