

Writing competition

Book an adventure and whisk us away to new lands and unforgettable characters.

Write a short story about an amazing and unforgettable adventure.

Cal's town didn't even have a traffic light. Just a single gas station, two churches, a diner that smelt like burnt bacon and broken dreams, and a population so small you could memorize it by accident. People in whispering Pines didn't leave not really. They either stayed or disappeared quietly into the background until you forgot they were ever there. Cal wasn't sure which one he was becoming.

He lived at the edge of town where the trailer park met the woods like two things that weren't meant to touch. His house leaned slightly to the left and creaked like it had secrets. His mum worked night shifts & his dad left so long ago that Cal couldn't remember his voice just the shadow left behind. But Cal didn't mind being alone. He spent most nights on the roof lying on a flattened out sleeping bag, a pair of cracked binoculars around his neck and a note book at his side filled with scribbled star maps and questions that no-one ever answered.

The sky didn't feel empty to him, it felt like a locked door and Cal had always been good at listening for keys. Most nights Leo came to Leo was the kind of friend who made everything louder brighter more alive. He wore his hoodie like armor and his sarcasm a sword, he hated silence but somehow he didn't mind Cal's. He'd lie next to him on the roof arms folded behind his head and say stuff like

"Do you think stars are just holes in the floor of heaven?"

"What if were just someone else's dream?"

"If aliens exist, do you think they'd hate school to?"

Cal would smile just a little and say "Depends. Do they get to leave?"

It was late September the air was cool and the sky was sharp & clear like black velvet punctured by diamonds the moon was just a silver. The kind of night where you feel like anything could happen but nothing ever does.

Leo passed him a flashlight and a warm dr. pepper

Cal stared at the flashlight in 1 hand, the lake warm con in the other.

The night was silent except ^{for} the wind moving through the grass

"Do you think they'll come?" Cal asked his voice small Leo sat down beside him. "If they're out there and there listening..... yeah I think they'll find you."

Cal tilted his head back eyes scanning the infinite black. He thought about how big the universe was how tiny he felt and how maybe, just maybe someone out there might

Care about him more than the people down here ever did.

But then Cal nudged him with his shoulder.

"And what if they don't show up?" Cal said cracking open his own warm soda, "you've still got me. I mean I'm not green & I don't have a spaceship, but I think that I'm a decent friend."

For the first time all day Cal smiled, a real smile. He took a sip of his Dr. pepper — it tasted flat & too sweet but somehow it felt like the most comforting thing in the world.

The flash light flickered in his hand, and for a second, Cal swore he saw something move across the sky — a glimmer a flash like a signal. He sat up straighter.

"Leo..... did you see that?"

Leo squinted at the stars then shrugged "Maybe. or maybe it's just the universe winking at you."

Cal didn't know if it was real or not but in that moment, it didn't matter. With Leo by his side and the sky full of possibilities, he didn't feel so alone anymore.

And somewhere far beyond the clouds, a faint light blinked twice before vanishing into the dark.

Cal ~~took~~ gripped the flash light then froze. The flashlight trembling in his hand Leo whispered "who is that"

but when Cal turned Leo was gone.

Behind him the roof was empty

then the voice whispered again, closer!

"Look up."