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Philip in the forest



Lecti

book studio

**Philip is out in
the forest with his class.**

**He gets angry
with his best friend Greg
and runs off alone.**

**Soon Philip is lost.
In front of him is a marsh.**

**Can Philip find his way
out of the forest?**



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Chapter 5

Barrels! Philip stares at them
and cannot believe his eyes.
Why are there barrels
in the middle of the forest?
He has never seen anything like it.
He wonders what grandfather would say.
He counts the barrels. Five.
They seemed to be rusty.

Philip wants to take a closer look.
He is curious and takes one step forward,
but stops immediately.
On the barrels are labels with skulls.
The barrels are dangerous.
They must be dangerous,
when there are labels with skulls on them.
Can they explode?
What if they contain poison?
It is better not to go close.

Philip backs into the forest.
He is careful and looks around.
He can still see the barrels,
but he feels safer at a distance.
The barrels must be illegally dumped,
Filip thinks.
Nobody leaves barrels in the forest.
Littering in nature is forbidden.

Philip feels cold. His feet are icy.
He looks at his shoes.
He has his best sport shoes on today.
Philip likes them most of all shoes
and never uses any others.
The shoes are cool with blue stripes.

Yesterday Mum said that he should
take rubber boots to the forest.
But Philip said no.
– It's always wet in the forest,
Mum tried to explain.
– So what? My sport shoes do not let in water,
Philip replied.
This morning it was dry outside.
Philip thought it was best
to take the sport shoes.
But now they are wet. Dripping wet.
Philip feels that the socks are soaking, too.
Wait! What is that?

Both shoes are dirty,
but on the right one is a big black spot.
Philip bends down to have a closer look.
Terrible! It is a leech, a blood-sucking leech.
Philip has seen leeches on television.
They suck blood from people
and become enormous and disgusting.
Grandfather would say
that Philip should not panic.

But what should he do?

– Calm down, Philip says aloud to himself.
He does not feel comfortable at all.
Exactly the opposite.
He tries to shake his foot,
but the leech does not fall off.
Philip tries to rub it off with the other shoe.
The leech still sticks to his shoe.

A tree branch, Philip thinks. I need a branch.
He looks around and finds a branch nearby.
He tries to lift off the leech,
but it hangs stubbornly on.
Philip must take it off by hand.
One more thing he has forgotten! Mittens.

His fingers are red and cold as ice.
He can hardly feel anything with his hands.
– Courage, he tells himself.
Now you must be brave.
Philip lifts the leech with two fingers
and throws it far into the marsh.
The leech is slippery.
It has left some slime on his shoe.
It has surely sucked blood from him, too.
No, he must not think about it.
He dries his hand on the trousers.

Then he tries to find some leaves
to dry off the shoe. Stop!

– It is dangerous to be near poisonous barrels,
he says aloud.
Big deal if you have slime on your shoe.
A leech is nothing against poisonous barrels.

Grandfather would say
that he should call the police.
Philip should do it, but his phone is dead.
And who would believe him?
Do his classmates or teacher trust him?
Or Greg?

Philip walks deeper into the forest
and stops under a spruce.
He is thinking for a long time.
He often tells stories to his classmates.
He is sometimes lying, too,
to make the stories even better.
Mum and Dad do not always believe in Philip
and neither do his classmates.

Only Greg trusts Philip.
He does not believe everything,
because he knows when Philip makes it up.
When Philip tells the truth, Greg believes him.
Greg always recognizes when Philip
is telling a lie. Greg is good.
Greg has made a mistake, but then what?
Greg is Philip's best friend.

Philip misses his friend.

It is not that important about the book.
Greg can return it later.
This friend knows about chemistry and biology.
Greg surely knows everything
about leeches as well.
He could tell Philip what the barrels contain.

– I have been unfair and mean to Greg,
says Philip aloud.
I must ask him to forgive me.
But first I must find him.

Philip turns to walk away. Where should he go?
And how can he find his way back
to the barrels together with Greg?