

Chapter 5

The Midnight Marauder

Staying Calm When Fear Arrives

Piney Woods Campground smelled like pine sap, woodsmoke, and adventure.

For {text:child_name} and the other campers, the day had been a whirlwind of hiking trails, gathering firewood, and skipping stones across the lake. Now the sun dipped below the trees, painting the sky in streaks of violet and orange.

Earlier in the evening, the campers pitched their tents carefully, spreading their sleeping bags inside and stacking backpacks near the picnic table. Their campsite felt like a small village in the forest.

The campers sat around the fire, roasting marshmallows until they were golden globs of goo.

Leo held up his stick proudly, saying, “Perfect! Best marshmallows ever.”

Ranger Miller chuckled when he saw the giant bag of marshmallows sitting on the picnic table.