

CHAPTER ONE

Earth, Spin: Check

“Run, Sadie! Run!” Gramma Rose yelled.

Where’s her voice coming from? “I’m running as fast as I can!” I screamed, but the wind swallowed my words. I looked down at my feet; they disappeared into darkness.

Terrorized by the lightning storm overhead, I jumped every time an earth-shaking boom of thunder followed a jagged strike. With the tempest so close, I feared being struck by the next bolt. Sideways heavy rain pelted my face like burning needles, stabbing mercilessly.

“I can’t see!” I ran smack into a tangle of branches that formed a maze. Their sharp teeth snapped at me as I crawled through. I knew home was on the other side. I had to get there.

Rumbling peals of thunder cracked, one after the other, shifting the ground beneath me. I pushed my hands hard against my ears to block out the loudest booms. Red lightning jolted my body with electric vibrations. Red flashes strobed all around. I sensed the shadow man behind me, but I couldn’t tell where he was.

“Keep running, Sadie!” Gramma Rose called out.

Petrified, I thought this was it: *The End of Sadie Myers*.

“I don’t want to die!” I yelled back.

The sound of footsteps squished behind me. I imagined breath on my neck. I felt his fingers graze my hair with creepy restraint.

“*No!* Leave me alone!”

CHAPTER THREE

Wake up, Amnesiac!

Using his fingers, the boy pulled his eyelids apart, as others might gently peel off a bandage so it would hurt the least amount possible. Objects gradually came into focus. Black shadows grew into white surfaces. What were they? The word wall appeared in his mind.

Eyes tearing, he looked down and saw that he was lying on a soft platform of some sort. This foreign space enclosed him like a box, and his breathing intensified. Trapped. His fight-or-flight response activated his body’s fiery nerves.

He stood up, spotting a face he didn't recognize in a piece of glass high up on the wall. He jumped, and his breathing sped up even more. His mind raced.

The boy took a deep breath and let it out slowly. His courage returning, he inched forward and studied the unknown face.

It looked vaguely familiar. Perhaps he'd seen it in a dream? Pale skin, nearly white, adorned dark circles above and below, not quite like blackened eyes.

He concluded this was his own face, long and narrow. His straight hair reached below his shoulders. It was dark brown, and so were his eyes. He looked down to see ribs that rose like mountain ranges on his lanky frame. He was wearing a white T-shirt and slightly loose aviation-themed pajama bottoms.

A flash of white caught his eye, and he looked out the window. As tiny white shreds of clouds fell to the earth, small bumps formed on his skin. Before he could panic, whether from the cold or the surprise, the words and meanings came to him: Goose bumps. They're okay. And so are these...snowflakes.

The door opened. He looked at the lady who entered. She was at least two heads shorter than him. Her frizzy hair had some pink here and there. She wore thick glasses that sat low on her nose. Her striped dress was partially hidden by a bland sweater.

No recognition sprang to mind. He took a step forward and noticed that she took an immediate step backward. He was the superior animal here. He felt it in his bones.

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