

Thursday, 7:34 p.m.

Unknown woods, Florida, USA

After they discovered the flat tires, Dylan knew they couldn't wait around. Lily thought they could go back to the shed and hide, but he reasoned that sooner or later, the guys would find them. They needed to run to get help. After about twenty minutes of heading toward where he thought he had come in, they leaned against a thick tree trunk to take a break and reevaluate their strategy.

Cell service was spotty at best. Every time Dylan checked, he had either one bar or nothing. On top of that, the battery was draining fast.

"Battery is dying. I'm gonna turn it off. We'll lose the light, though."

She rummaged through her bag and pulled out a lantern.

"Where'd you get that?" he asked.

“I saw it in the shed. That was before you showed up. I grabbed it in case I needed to run.”

“Smart girl! Good thinking.”

“I’m not turning it on now. But in case,” she said. “Do you know where we are?”

He shook his head in exasperation. “I’ve only lived here for a few months. No, I have no idea where we are.”

“All right, then, how are supposed to escape? I don’t see anything or anybody around here. You would never find a place without people in Hong Kong.”

“That’s because Hong Kong is one of the most densely populated cities in the world. But you’re here now. We’re in the woods. And it’s possible I got the orientation wrong. Maybe the other way was where I came in.”

“It’s weird. They slashed the tires, but they didn’t come after us. Why?”

“Didn’t the guy say something about some other dude having a way to look for us? I hope we didn’t trip over something to alert them where we are.”

“What’s that noise? You hear that?”

He listened. It appeared to be leaves ruffling. A crunching sound. His heartbeat pounded.

He felt the blow before he realized it. Lily screamed. And the world went dark.