

We all were cheering and celebrating until thunder cracked right over head. We all gathered our things and ran as fast as we could back to the road. The rain was starting to catch up and a light drizzle had started to fall. It wasn't till the rain had started pouring did we make it back to the road. But, the limo wasn't there. I groaned and Devin punched a tree. I guess we're on our own again. I say. At least we have a road to follow and we know where to go. Nika says. True but it'll take us weeks to get to the Smokies. Jacob says. Well then we better get moving, maybe we'll find a bus to take us. Devin says and we all start walking. Thankfully the road was going south so we didn't have to worry about the direction we were going in. The rain made everything worse. the constant 'drip' 'drip' almost made me go crazy. We walked until we couldn't. My legs were already sore from the previous day but this was torture. Worst. Quest. Ever. Nobody talked. I walked near the front next to Devin with Jacob and Nika behind us. My shoes were soaked and felt cold and wet. The wind battered us back and forth. We could barely stay on our feet between the slippery road and wind. We continued on nevertheless and didn't stop until we saw the next sign that indicated a gas station and hotel nearby. We all hurried to the place and found a small two star hotel and a Shell gas station. We avoided the gas station and went to the hotel. There were three cars parked at it and we rushed in. The doors wouldn't budge and it took all of us to pry it open enough. We went in and sat there panting and dripping wet. My teeth were chattering like a skeleton as were everyone else's. I feared that if we didn't get warm and dry soon, hypothermia was a real fear. I got up and looked at the lobby. It was lit by a chandelier and had a small front desk. I walk to the desk and find a bell. I tap it. The tiny ding echoed down the halls and I heard a voice say 'coming!'. A small squat woman with glasses rounded the corner. She took one look at us and her eyes went big. Oh goodness!! What happened to you?! She asks us. I already had a lie made up. We were on a hike for our camp and got separated from our leader. We got lost in the storm and followed the road here. Can we stay here the night? I ask her, amazed at how convincing the lie was. Her face softened. Of course!! GEORGE!! We have guests! She says. A man who looked to be in his late thirties walked in. His eyes went wide as well. Woah! You all do need a room. You guys must be some tough cookies to brave this storm. This way! He says and leads us to an elevator and we all pile in. So, where are you from? He

Asks. Devin opens his mouth but I cut him off. We're from a camp up north of here. I tell him. Cool what camp? My brother works at one up north. I hesitate. Camp Kyle by the ocean. Jacob says. George accepted this answer and smiled. Great camp that is. He says and doesn't talk the rest of the way. I shoot Jacob a grateful glance and he nods with a smile. We stop on our floor and he leads us to our room. These are joining rooms so you don't have to share. He says and me and Nika go in on the right and the boys on the left. Devin winks at me and walks in. The room wasn't too bad considering what hotel we were at. Two queen beds were next to each other. Nika crashed on top of the one closest to the door. This is heaven. She says. I chuckle and inspect the room. There was a tv but I knew we wouldn't watch any. Once I did my inspection, I sat down on my bed. Nika was right. I sighed and Nika chuckled. Maybe we should change and get a shower. She says. I didn't want to move but I knew she was right. I'll go first on the shower. I tell her and grab my other shirt and shorts. I close the door to the bathroom and start the water. I take a hot shower and let the grime and dirt wash away along with my worries. It felt good to be clean and warm. I came out a new person and Nika was flipping through channels on the tv. Your turn. I tell her and she goes to shower. I open my backpack and grab my journal and the pen Annabeth had gotten me for my birthday a few years ago when she learned I journaled. Of course it was silver. I clicked it and opened to a fresh page. A lot had happened and it took me two full pages to write everything and a page of it took up a drawing of the Moon Falls. It was some of my better work. I flipped to the page with the map. It was still there with the dot still hovering over the Smokies. Nika comes out and flops back on her bed. I checked the clock and realized it was only 9 AM. We walked all night. Wow. I'm gonna get some shut eye, wake me if something happens. I tell Nika and fall asleep.

