

A hand with light skin and teal nail polish holds a yellow pencil vertically. The hand is wearing a teal bracelet with a pink charm. The background is a dark grey, textured surface.

Maybe Later

Diaries Of Adventures

A little adventure, a little happy ending

Riley Ip

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*Always for the gang, the friends and the families.
Forever for those who support and smile around me.*

-Riley

Chapter 1: Is Thinking

I really thought about it. I mean really. I wanted to go to a summer camp, but I was also scared.

A million questions raced through my mind. *What's going to happen in the camp? Will I make friends?* I was actually worried. My mom had already signed me up for the camp. I guess there's no going back. I still had a million questions even when I saw the schedule and everything. I mean, like, I wasn't too scared but I was just curious about camp and that's what was making me scared. I'm like ten already and I know that I've been to sleepovers and stuff, but it's just different! In my bed, I went into deep thinking. It was around 9:00 at night, just when my mom came back from work. I was kind of scared to tell her what I was thinking.

Mom came into my room. "Hey Riley! Guess what, I bought you some new clothes. They are super cool." In that moment, I had no breath to speak. Mom looked at me and knew what was going on.

"Oh, you know a summer camp isn't that scary," Mom started. I stared at the ceiling.

“I know, but, I’m actually scared because of curiosity,” I replied still looking at the ceiling.

Mom smiled.

“I was scared too. You know, you never know what’s going to happen. But you know that nothing would go wrong,” Mom explained. I didn’t want to hurt mom’s feelings but I think something will go wrong.

“Now, I have to go. Goodnight,” Mom waved.

“Goodnight, mom,” I said.

She walked out, closing the door so only the light from my window came in.

I was still in my deep thinking. I couldn’t really sleep so I thought about all the things that would make camp better. From all that thinking, I was finally tired and floated into my dreams.

I didn’t really remember what I dreamed about. But I think it was something about the camp. About someone called Kriston.

I woke up at about midnight. Awoken by the thought of my dream. Should I be scared? I don’t really know. I don’t even know if I should tell mom every thought.

Only two words floated in my mind: *maybe later*.

Chapter 2: Is Dreamy

Mom woke me up at 4:00 in the morning, why does she have to wake me up so early?!

I didn't argue though, I just sighed and got off my bed. There's basically nothing to do in the morning. Surprisingly, mom let me watch YouTube for an hour. I watched every new video that came out, which is my best record. I tried to hide the iPad so I could watch more. It didn't work though. Mom caught me and took the iPad away. I guess I'll just have to get ready. I really wanted to impress the other campers so I did my best to do everything from a shower to make up. After I was ready, I went down for breakfast. There was really not much to eat. All I had was a piece of bread and a glass of milk . Mom told me It was time to go.

Wait, no. I told mom it was time to go. I didn't want to be late for the first summer camp in my life! But mom said it was fine! It wasn't that fine. I got in the car to the train station. When I got out of the car, I realized that I was the first one! Actually, I wasn't. I found out that the first person who was there was a boy called Kriston. He actually was a fifth grader from my school! Then I saw something. I didn't

know what it was. It was something beautiful. Was I in a dream? I shook my head and everything became normal.

“Uhh, mom? What happened a second ago?” I asked.

“A second ago, you were standing there having a daydream,” Mom replied without looking at me.

I shook my head. I wanted to say, “Hey! It wasn’t a daydream,” but I didn’t dare.

I still didn’t know what happened. But I know it could be a mystery forever, *or not*.

By now, all the kids had gathered together. It was surprising there were only a few people since I heard on the phone that there would be a hundred kids at least. I looked around. I thought there would be some more interesting people but there were only some boring people who don’t like posing around like me. At least, that’s what I know now. I was still daydreaming. It was already time to go on the train and I didn’t know.

“See you mom,” I waved.

Mom waved back.

“See you later. We will talk...*maybe later*,” Mom waved.

With a smile, I was off to the adventure.

Chapter 3: Is Scary

OMG. I mean it. OMG, like OMG. I have no idea why, but this happened. The counselor announced this: “OK, so did everyone eat breakfast? Because we are going to be on this train for five hours.”

OMG. OMG!!!! Seriously, this is too long. I mean, what are we going to do on the train? OMG. How am I not going to be bored? I am going to bored. How can anyone not be bored! I am mostly talking to you scientist, both physically and logically. OMG!!!!!!!!

OK, OK, OK. Let’s keep going on with the story. Well, all of that was daydreaming. Then I saw the thing again. It wasn’t a thing though. It was Kriston.

I wanted to tell Kriston that he was in the same school as me. But instead, I told the counselor. And I forgot to tell you, her name was Betty Anne Johnson. She looked like she was 18! I mean, 18 and being a counselor?! Well, I don’t know really, but she had those shiny blue eyes that sparkles. With golden long hair like the golden fleece. I could say she is so pretty, but I have to say she looks like a angel!

“Betty, I think I know him,” I explained, pointing to Kriston. Betty looked at Kriston with a mischievous smile.

“Oh. Really?” Betty whispered loudly.

Betty waved at Kriston and shouted, “Hey, Kriston! Riley here says that she thinks she knows you,” Kriston looked at me. I turned away.

“Yeah, I do know her,” Kriston replied.

We waited for what felt like an hour for the train to arrive. Seriously, why does it have to be so long! And guess what? The first thing we did when we got on was to stand. Yeah, standing. I thought we had no hope of getting a seat.

But to my surprise, the longer we rode, the fewer people there were. Huh, I thought it would be the complete opposite. I was just standing there doing nothing when I heard a scream.

It sounded familiar. Very familiar. Then suddenly when all seemed calm, the train crashed. The whole train shook. It was like an earthquake!

I was so scared. Also pretty excited since I was never in a train crash before. But when the lights started to go on and off, I got really scared.

“Everything’s OK, calm down,” Betty explained, not calming herself down. I looked at Kriston.

He was just standing there and being very calm. How was he not afraid?! I thought everything was clear because the train started to move again. But no. The lights went out. The whole train went wild.

“What’s happening?!” a girl screamed.

“Ouch! Cut it out!” a boy shouted.

Wow. What a wild group. I stared at Kriston, who looked surprisingly calm.

How could he stay calm?! Oh no. Oh no. Oh no. I thought I saw something. Something very very familiar. Just then, the lights went on. The train started moving. I thought I'd be stuck here forever! The train was back to normal. But I was still scared. What was that thing? The thing I saw. I shouldn't think now.

Maybe later.

Chapter 4: Is Fun

After the train arrived safely to the camp area, I got scared. I mean, the place was beautiful and nothing was scary. It's just that I had a feeling something bad might happen.

I looked around. Nature everywhere.

"OK kids. Girls in a room, boys in a room, don't argue," Betty snapped.

I turned to see a shadow near the bushes. It couldn't be anything bad. We were in the mountains.

It was normal. Or was it? That question floated through my head, making me confused.

I was daydreaming again. Betty had already got the keys to the rooms. This was nothing like a real camp. It was like a summer nature resort! I thought I'd be sleeping on grass!

"Here are your keys. Don't forget about them," Betty said, giving me the keys.

Why me? Never mind. Too many thoughts. I followed Betty and two other girls, Abbie and Nicole, to our room. The room was...well, it was small but super cute. But it was the right size for three girls. Then I saw something shadowy. And scary. I had no idea what it was though. It seemed like nobody noticed it, but I did. Never mind, I was probably seeing stuff again. In the meantime, Betty was explaining stuff about safety and how you

should never go in the lake without a life vest. It was boring and thankfully I was daydreaming about that shadow.

“OK, now. I’m going to my own room. Meet us downstairs in about 20 minutes with your swimsuits on,” Betty commanded.

I went over to close the door. I looked at the other girls whom I pretty much already knew, since we had been chatting on the train. Sorry for not telling you about that part.

“So? What are ya waiting for?” I asked, turning to get my swimsuit.

I had a blue and pink swimsuit. It wasn’t my best one but I still liked it.

Abbie and Nicole also had the same type as I had. It wasn’t really surprising since we weren’t going to a summer resort pool or the beach. Holding our keys in one hand and hanging our goggles on the other, we rushed to the door. Suddenly, I felt like I had all the power in the world and I could run faster.

Without any trouble, I got to the door first.

“Hey, no fair!” Abbie complained with a stomp.

“I wasn’t using any magic, it’s a fair game,” I replied.

I walked out laughing. With Abbie and Nicole laughing too, I felt like we had known each other before summer camp.

“Yeah, right. Who sees magic?” Nicole laughed as we went down the stairs.

We all laughed. Then, I thought I heard someone else laughing with us. Or was it just me hearing things? That was weird.

Laughing down the stairs, we beat the boys to the lake.

“OK kids. I want you all to swim to that big board over there,” Betty explained, pointing at a big white board that said: “SUP BOARD.”

We all rushed down to the lake. Once again, I felt like I was more powerful than ever. I jumped into the water in no time. I felt something tickling my fingers. I was too confused to think. Should I? *Maybe later...*

Chapter 5: Is Fun and Scary

Then I, well, I was...I couldn't really remember what happened. I was just in the water and I felt that all my power was gone. Everything turned slo-mo. I felt like I was washed away. Far, far away. But then, I saw it. I saw that I was swimming towards the board even though I wasn't doing anything. I was on that board. It was a miracle. I was doing nothing and then, suddenly, I was on the board! I saw him again. Kriston. I don't know why I kept looking at him. Maybe it was because... nevermind. I keep thinking too much. But before I could think anymore, I was pulled into the water. Then I realized something. WATER FIGHT!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Kriston was pushing people off of the board and then pulled himself onto the board.

"I'm the king!!!!!" Kriston shouted. I climbed up to the board too.

"And here's the queen!" Kriston shouted again. "Actually, I don't want a queen. Bye bye."

Wow. That was it. But I slid myself to the other side before he could push me.

"Fine, you could be the queen on the other side," Kriston said.

But then there were no queens or kings. They pushed me off, I pushed them off, everyone pushed everyone off, people

pushed people off. It was crazy. Basically, Kriston was the king. Kriston pushed everyone until it was only me. I knew he was going to push me so I pushed myself back into the water.

“No, no, no, I’ll do it myself,” I said, pushing myself off the board then back on again.

It was weird that every minute I’ll have to push myself off the board. Like how “OMG” it would be when people read this (unless I hide this diary). Anyways, I was just sitting on that board trying to get Kriston’s attention somehow when I heard a shout. Everyone heard it.

“KIDS! SWIM BACK TO THE DOCK!!” Betty shouted. Wow, what made her that nervous? There weren’t any megalodons or anything like the Loch Ness Monster. Or were there? Nevermind.

“OK, OK, we’re coming now. What’s the matter?” I replied, rolling my eyes like it was a joke.

We all swam back to the dock. Well, we floated back to the dock because we thought nothing was wrong. After we were all on the dock, I finally knew what had happened.

Someone was missing. I thought I knew who it was, but I was not sure.

“OK. Kids, there is something very urgent and I need you to go back to your rooms now,” Betty explained.

Wow, I had never seen Betty so afraid before.

“What happened?” one of the boys called Devon asked. Betty shook her head despair.

I looked at my foot, then at Betty.

“Look Betty. There are lots of scary things happening around the world. You can’t get that thought out of your head unless you tell someone. Come on, It couldn’t be that bad,” I calmed.

Betty smiled but still had that look in her eyes.

“I am so sorry to tell you, but Nicole went missing. She was with you when she came right?” Betty asked. I looked at Abbie who looked frightened too.

“She was with me but, well, I never saw her when we were playing. She might have drowned if I’m correct with my guess.” I couldn’t think anymore. I couldn’t say it. I couldn’t say *maybe later*.

Chapter 6: Is Creepy...

Everyone stared at me with surprise.

“How can you say that! She’s your friend! How could you think she drowned?!?!” Abbie shouted.

I gulped. I was speechless. I thought it was true. I didn’t want to say anything but I couldn’t help but say it.

“Well, I...” I started. “I couldn’t help it, OK? I was just... It was just a thought! It just popped into my head.”

Abbie was pale. Very pale. Her face was snow white and her hands trembled.

“Abbie! I didn’t mean it! OK?, I’m sorry,” I cried. Nothing changed.

Then all of a sudden, Abbie fainted.

“Oh my gosh! It was all my fault,” I cried. I was scared. Very scared.

First, it was Nicole, then Abbie, who would be next?

“Hey, Riley, don’t be scared. It happens,” Kriston said sarcastically.

I stared silently. It was all my fault and I deserved it.

“No, it doesn’t. It never does,” I cried. I tried to run away but something pulled me back.

I just couldn’t help it! Everything was just so scary.

Suddenly, I heard a pop in the water. It was Nicole. She was just floating there.

“OMG! Guys, look! It’s Nicole!” I shouted. But my smile disappeared when I realized that Nicole wasn’t exactly swimming in the lake. She was FLOATING. She had actually drowned! I shivered in the creepiness.

“OK, umm, kids. Stay out of the way. Let me take care of this,” Betty said.

Abbie was on the grass, Nicole was in the water. How is this a good camp?! Now there are two situations, I couldn’t believe it!

“Kids, please go to your rooms,” Betty begged. I was sad and scared. But then something flashed into my head. *An image of a boy...*

“Kriston!” a voice shouted. “Noo!”

An image of a tomb with a boy in it.

I had no idea what this thought was... Oh my gosh! Kriston is dead! Wait a second... But Kriston was right here. Huh?

“Ummm, Kriston?” I started. No answer. I knew it. I knew it. Was this a dream? If it was, this was the worst dream ever. *I didn’t understand.*

“What do you not understand?” Kriston asked.

“Kriston?! I thought you were...well, how could you know?” I asked. There was a creepy smile on Kriston's face. I thought of the picture of the boy in my head. I didn’t know why. Was Kriston the one... Well, nevermind. I looked at the place where Nicole had been floating, I didn’t see anybody. She had disappeared.

I kept quiet as we went up to our rooms. I also kept away from Kriston. I never thought that going up alone would be that scary. Staying in the room by myself was scary too. I didn't want to think that much. Well, I just have to say "maybe later." Or *maybe later...*

Chapter 7: Is an Idea

Quiet. Silent. Hushed. These are all words of the unspoken but not the unknown. In the darkness, silence tore me apart. Don't even mention the thoughts. The horrible unknown about Kriston. I curled into a ball clenching fear in my hands. I didn't want fear to escape. But I didn't want fear to stay either. Other kids would be too terrified to think. But not me, I think the unknown and the known. I planned the ways I could figure this mystery out. But beyond these thoughts, I was still scared. I was still terrified. I wanted to find a way to escape this horror. It seemed that every thought was true. Even though they were just thoughts.

Before I could think more, I heard a knock on my door.

"Who are you?" I asked. No sound. I opened the door. To my horror, a dead body lay on the ground. I tried to scream but my mouth breathed no sound. I tried to run but my legs melted. In my mind, I was as calm as ever. *What is this? Is this a dream?* I tried not to think. I closed my eyes and counted to ten: *1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.* I opened my eyes and everything was back to normal. It actually worked! Well, kind of. I walked outside and bumped into Abbie.

"Abbie! You're back!" I shouted with delight. Abbie laughed.

"Where will I be If I wasn't back? Home?" Abbie joked. I laughed. Abbie and I walked downstairs to the cafe.

“Wait a minute... Is Nicole...” I started. Abbie closed her eyes and sighed. She looked at me with despair.

“No. I know now,” I whispered, trembling. Despite having lots of courage, I couldn’t overcome the horror about my friends.

“Umm Abbie? I’m sorry that I said Nicole drowned,” I apologized.

Abbie smiled. “I accept your apology.”

I smiled. As the joy swelled up in my heart, I thought of something. A plan.

“Hey, Abbie. Meet me tomorrow night by the lake. I have something important to do,” I said. Abbie blinked in confusion, trying to get what I meant. She finally nodded and walked back to her room. I waved and walked away. I still had one last thing to do. Nicole. I had to find Nicole. I knew it might be a crazy idea but I had to find her. But there was one problem. I had no idea where Nicole could be. Or maybe someone could tell me. Someone called Kriston. I knew Kriston was part of this. Especially when Kriston knew what I was thinking. If I had thought one more thought, I might have burst into Kriston's room. I might have shouted at him about what he’d done. I might have got revenge on him. But I needed to find Nicole. She had all the answers we needed. If I tried, I might find her. Staring at the dark sky, I sighed. *But where?* I thought it was impossible. Or maybe not. I couldn’t hold it anymore. I couldn’t think anymore. I wanted to burst into Kriston’s room. I couldn’t think more. I couldn’t just stand here and think. I had to get answers from

Kriston. I had to find Nicole, if that was the last thing I would do. I ran upstairs, past my room, past the cafe and the library. I burst into Kriston's room.

“KRISTON!”

I had to shout his name. Or did I make the right decision? Should I think before I act next time? Or, *maybe later*.

Chapter 8: Is a Clue

“What??!!” Kriston shouted. I stopped and looked at him weirdly. Instead of a boy standing being confused, there was a boy standing there slapping the table because he lost a chess game!

“Kriston! What are you doing?!?!?? Can’t you see I’m screaming at you like crazy?!!!” I screamed. Kriston looked confused.

“OK. I can definitely see that, but I can’t see why I lost this game!!” Kriston replied. He was so useless. What’s wrong with him anyway?

“Look, Kriston. Tell me all the answers,” I said. Kriston still was confused. He cocked his head and smiled

“I have no idea what you are talking about,” Kriston replied, smiling creepily.

Just then, I saw this tiny red booklet in his pocket.

“Hey, how about you go play a game of chess and I go back to my room, OK?” I suggested. I crept outside of his door and listened.

“HE CHEATED!!!!!!” Kriston shouted in his room. His red booklet flew in the air and dropped by the door. I picked the booklet up and in a flash, I ran out toward the lake.

I felt scared at first when I was running. But I had to be strong. I opened the booklet and guess what was inside? OK, I'll read it for you:

Suspect: Nicole

Age: ✕

Reason: Matching pearl

Extra info: I put her in the dungeon under the cafe.

I stopped. Wait a minute. Nicole never drowned! And what does ✕ mean? Huh? What does "matching pearl" mean? I thought it might be something about...nevermind.

OK, so I had to get Nicole. Reading the booklet and running was a super hard thing to do. I tried reading it but the booklet said:

Nicole zuuna ago

30 xiii 2 zuna puouuhp duoduopu

It was so weird. When I finally got to the cafe I saw something. It was a black lever or something. I wanted to pull the lever but I had this weird thought. It was something like:

Nicole won't be inside the cafe. She is under the cafe and over the hills.

Such a weird thought. But I pulled the lever anyway. The lever turned red as I pulled it. For a minute it did nothing. But then it glowed and opened a camouflaged door. WOW. OMG. That was amazing! I had no idea how it happened. I walked inside. The inside felt weird. It smelled like rotten fruit and it was pitch black. I guess it might have been darker than a black

hole. I walked silently into the unknown darkness. Should I be scared? *Maybe later.*

Chapter 9: Is Friendship Mindset

Darkness in the deep. When you hear these words, you might run away. But I won't. I needed to find the clues. I was just about to take another step when I heard a cry.

"Hello?" I asked. I heard another cry. It sounded very familiar. But I didn't know who it was. I walked closer. The cry was deep and I think it was...

"Nicole!" I shouted. I ran to where I heard the cry. I knew it! It was Nicole.

"Nicole! What are you doing here?!" I asked. She stops crying and looked at me.

"I don't know what happened. I was just playing in the lake and suddenly everything went black," Nicole replied.

"OK whatever happened, let's get out of here," I said. Nicole looked at me for a second and looked at the corner of the room. I first was confused, then I realized there was a camera watching us.

"Oh no. We're stuck," I moaned. Nicole looked at the camera and looked at the ceiling.

"What if we go up?" Nicole asked. I smiled.

"Smart move," I started. "But how are we getting up?". Well, that was a question no one could answer. Questions and questions. Some could be answered and some could not. I

looked around for some clues. None. there were no clues. The only thing that was closest to a clue was a book.

“The book!” I shouted suddenly.

“What?” Nicole asked. She looked seriously confused even though she was listening the whole time.

“Remember when we went to the Goozle Magic bookstore on the train and we bought a book called Survival Skills and the book called Tricks to Life Magic?” I asked. Nicole thought for a bit and went digging into her pocket.

“Umm, Nicole?” I asked. Surprisingly, Nicole pulled out both of the books.

“I kept them both in here all along,” Nicole smiled.

“Seriously?! OK, too much excitement. Let’s get to work,” I said. Nicole passed me the Tricks to Life magic book. The only way to be faster was to have two people on separate books. That’s what we did. Reading that Tricks to Life magic book was hard. First of all, it only had one picture each chapter and every chapter was over 100 pages long! Second, there were 30 chapters in this book! That would add up to 3000 pages! Third of all, the words were very hard to understand and if you could understand them, it wouldn’t make sense. I tried reading it and after 10 minutes, I already felt like I was so ready to quit.

But I didn’t. I tried to focus on the book so hard that I didn’t even realize Nicole was staring at me.

“Boo!” Nicole shouted.

“Ahh!” I shouted, “What were you thinking!?” Nicole laughed and pointed to my book. I rolled my eyes.

“Guess what? I found out that you could make something to climb up with just a rope and iron!” Nicole said. I looked through my book for something to add on.

“Well to make rope, you just have to have some hair clips and two people meditating. Instructions say that you and I have to meditate and think of the hair clips turning into ropes,” I explained. Nicole looked at me like I was famous or something.

“Wow!” Nicole shouted. I smiled.

“Now do you wanna get out or not? Let's go,” I said. And in no time flat, Nicole and I got out of the dungeon. I should have been happy, *maybe later?*

Chapter 10: Is Relaxed and Happy

It feels so good when you're out of the dungeon It's like when you're grounded for two months and you finally got out to freedom. Freedom felt so good. I could smell...chicken?!

"Nicole! We are gonna miss dinner! It's chicken!!!" I shouted. Nicole looked nervous. Chicken was our favorite so don't judge us. Nicole and I sprinted so fast, we didn't even know where we were going. We saw Kriston come out of the building to get his bottle and went back in. The door started to close slowly. Then it began to close faster, faster and faster until Nicole and I sprinted like light to get in the door before it could close.

"Wow... That. Was. GUCCI!" Nicole shouted. We both laughed. Humor came to us even though we were trapped in a dungeon, like, 5 minutes ago. We went up to the cafe.

"We made it!" I shouted. The cafe was empty. Huh? What was happening? My head was getting dizzy, and dizzier, and dizzier...

"Wake up!" a voice shouted. I was confused. Abbie's face appeared in front of my eyes.

"Huh? Where's Nicole? What's happening?" I asked. Abbie looked worried.

"You said you wanted to meet me and you walked into Kriston's room and stole a red booklet and you were getting

dizzy and you were like...you were like in 100 years sleep and you were like all weird and were sleeping and...and..." Abbie shouted, trying to catch her breath.

I was getting dizzy because of how fast Abbie was talking.

"Woah, woah, slow down..." I started. "Where is Nic..."

Before I could talk anymore, Abbie pulled me downstairs to the lake. I saw Nicole standing there.

"Hey, Nicole!" I waved. Nicole waved back. She was so excited.

"Thanks for saving me! OK, so what's your plan?" Nicole asked. I was confused. It was just a dream that I saved her right? Right? I mean well, nevermind.

"Uhh, I'll tell you. You all know there's something weird going on right? I suspect Kriston. Look at this red booklet, it says you have a matching pearl," I started. Nicole took the book excitedly and soon her expression change.

"Wait...what's the matching pearl?" Nicole asked. I shrugged.

"Anyways, we have to find out about that pearl. Abbie, go and steal the pearl and meet me in the...umm... Just find me and Nicole," I said. Abbie didn't look convinced.

"Why me?!" Abbie asked.

"Cause your good at stealing stuff," I winked. Nicole laughed. I rolled my eyes. Wow. We did a lot of stuff in those 10 seconds! Anyways, back to the story. Abbie rushed into the building.

“Where should we go?” Nicole asked. I pointed to the woods next to the building.

“ I read in the red booklet that his secret base was in the woods,” I started.

“Will Abbie find us?” Nicole asked.

“She might,” I answered. With a laugh, we walked into the woods. Sun was just setting. It was a beautiful sight. I could have felt better. But I knew there was still a harsh adventure waiting for us. I should have been scared. Well, *maybe later*.

Chapter 11: Is Mystery Forest

Have you ever experienced the scariest forest horror attraction at any Halloween Horror Night? Was that night your scariest night ever? Well, I had the same situation right here. Nicole and I were walking through this horror forest. It basically was the scariest thing ever. With the creepiest sounds and dead animals, it might have been scary enough to be in the Japan Universal Studios.

“Umm, Nicole?” I started.

“Yeah?” Nicole answered. I wanted to tell her we should turn around, but I know even if I asked her to turn around just because I was scared, she would say “no” because she has enough grit to keep going. I tried to talk but I couldn’t. I tried to think but I couldn’t. Right before I was about to run away, I heard something.

“Nicole, did you hear that?” I asked. Nicole looked around.

“Hear what?” Nicole asked. I heard it again. It sounded like footsteps. Coming towards us. Closer and closer.

“Nicole, run!” I shouted. We ran through the trees as fast as we could. Nicole pulled me down to the ground

“Hide, I think it’s Kriston,” Nicole whispered. I ducked down as much as I could. It was Kriston. He walked into a giant rock and disappeared... Wait, what?! How could he have walked into a rock?!

“Nicole! Look, Kriston walked into a rock. How could that be possible?” I asked.

Nicole smiled and got up to her feet.

“The only way to know is to do it yourself!” Nicole shouted and then ran into the rock. Well, she didn’t go inside the rock but she did run into the rock and fell on her back. I laughed so hard I could barely breathe. I was just laughing and laughing I didn’t even know where I was going. I bumped into the rock and still didn’t go inside the rock. Nicole got up before I fell down, but the funny thing was that I fell on her and we both fell down again!

“LOL! That was just so...weird!” I laughed. Every day was a fun day. But there was still more to experience.

Nicole got serious.

“Wait a minute. How did Kriston go in?” Nicole asked. I shrugged. Inside of me, I knew there was still a way.

“I could tell you,” a voice said in the darkness. I looked around.

“Who are you?” I asked. I saw a little dog by an oak tree. It couldn’t be that dog talking. Could it?

Nicole looked at me in confusion.

“I am a talking dog that knows the past and the future of anything,” the dog explained. Nicole and I looked at each other confused.

This was confusing. I knew there were lots of mysteries in the world, and I could think about them. Well, *maybe later*.

Chapter 12: Is the Start to the Answer

“I know this all sounds weird and confusing to you. I know the answers to everything. When I saw you two, I thought I should help you. I am the guide dog,” The dog explained. I was not that confused, it’s just when there’s a dog talking it’s really hard to concentrate.

“Thanks, guide dog! What is your name and what are you doing in this such creepy forest?” Nicole asked, feeling sad for the dog. I just felt a creepy forest couldn’t be a place where a cute little doggie lives.

“Oh, I don’t mind this forest. It appears to be very amusing. My name is Kayleigh by the way,” the dog answered. I smiled knowing the dog was OK. She was a brave little doggie after all.

I knew there was no time to talk so I got on to what I should be doing.

“Enough talking. Can you tell me about what you know, Kayleigh?” I asked wondering about all the strange stuff that happened.

“Kriston is not the bad guy. Kriston wasn’t the person who walked in the rock. The person who walked into the rock didn’t actually walk into it. The person had a password that opens a

door,” Kayleigh scrambled. Wow. That came out fast. Nicole and I were stunned by everything.

“Wai-wait a second. So Kriston was not the person who walked into the rock? What opens what-what? A floor??” Nicole asked, looking confused. I was pretty sure Nicole was just messing around. Or was she? Oh, nevermind.

“Calm down. It was not Kriston and what did you think I said?! A floor??!” Kayleigh asked, rolling in the grass. Such weird people there are. I didn’t mean it though. It was just a joke.

“Uh, I did think you said a floor,” Nicole answered, rolling her eyes. I rolled my eyes too. Too many weird people. I didn’t mean it though. Anyways, Nicole and Kayleigh calmed down from their weird, funny argument.

“Back to business now. If Kriston wasn’t the bad guy, who is the bad guy?” I asked. Kayleigh rolled her eyes. She threw me a book titled “Diary.”

“Go to page 24,” Kayleigh yawned. I flipped to the page. What was on there was very weird.

“The longest time a guide dog could bark was four hours??” I read. Kayleigh rolled her eyes again. Wow. Lots of eye rolling here.

“No, no no. You read it wrong. It’s ‘The longest answers a guide dog could tell was four sentences,’” Kayleigh said. I yawned. It was a long night and we hadn’t even slept!

I looked at the sky. Wow. It was almost morning! I guess it was about 4:00.

“Well, we know the information now. It’s almost morning. If our counselor noticed we aren’t there, we’ll get in big trouble,” I explained. Kayleigh sighed and looked sad.

“I can’t follow you. I can only guide in the forest,” Kayleigh sighed. Nicole looked sad and I was feeling the same way.

“Well, in that case, see you around,” Kayleigh waved.

“Bye,” Nicole and I waved. It was a sad day. I should be sad.
Maybe later.

Chapter 13: Is the Question

If you ever watched the movie “Matilda” or any other movies like that kind, you would definitely know what it’s like to be in trouble. Since you already know what it’s like to be in trouble, you’ll be ready for our story. Nicole and I got in trouble. Trouble that involved Kriston...

We were running back to the camp when we got caught. When we got caught by Kriston.

And guess who else got caught by Kriston? Abbie. Because of the stealing I told her to do.

“Abbie! Wait? How did Kriston catch you?!” I asked, surprised. Abbie looked at me in despair. She was weak, and she didn't speak. What did they do to her??!

“Hello, girls. Look who I’ve brought here? Sad, are you? ” Kriston smirked. Nicole and I grew angry. It was so rude of Kriston and yes, we were sad. But we were also speechless.

There were a lot of weird things going on right now and I had no idea what to say. If Kriston really was the bad guy, maybe everything wasn’t what I thought it would be. Maybe the camp is just another one of those camp nightmares.

“We have to do something! Kriston is probably going to throw Abbie in the dungeon!” Nicole whispered. I had no idea, but I did have a question I had wanted to ask Kriston for a long time.

“Kriston, Who are you?” I asked. Nicole’s eyes grew big, Abbie didn’t look as weak anymore. I knew I asked the right question. I knew Nicole and Abbie wanted to know too.

“I, well, I...” Kriston murmured. Kriston seemed slightly confused.

For some weird reason, Kriston dropped Abbie and ran off into the building.

“Wow. That was fast” Nicole said. It was super fast. I mean, it was weird too. It was probably one of those time where someone would gasp, “OMG, that was so weird.”

“OMG, that was so weird,” Abbie gasped. Well, it was definitely one of the times to say that.

“Abbie, what happened back when you were stealing?” Nicole asked. I smiled. Of course, we all wanted to hear what happened when Abbie was stealing.

“Oh yeah. I just wanted to tell you that,” Abbie started. “I was trying to get the red booklet when Kriston came into the room. He didn’t exactly see me though. I tried to hide in the bed sheets but Kriston sat on me.” Abbie’s face got redder and redder. I tried not to laugh but I knew Abbie already knew I’m laughing. I really couldn’t hold it in anymore. So after, half a second, I burst out laughing. Nicole did too, she couldn’t hold it in either.

“OK, OK, OK, I admit it. It was super funny. I mean not you Abbie, it’s just the story. Like...like...” I laughed. It was super funny, Abbie laughed too.

“No, it’s OK. I thought it was funny too. It’s weird.” Abbie laughed like it was nothing. I knew she wouldn’t really get mad. But then Nicole changed whole subject. It was a scary subject.

“Riley, why was Kriston running away from your question?” Nicole asked. I stopped laughing. I didn’t actually know and I didn’t know if I should answer.

“I don’t know, maybe it’s just...” I started. “Maybe he experienced something bad and he isn’t really happy about anything.”

Nicole rolled her eyes. I knew it might not be true but there was still a chance.

“Look, it can’t be like that. We need to look for clues and come up with a better prediction,” Nicole explained. I knew she was right. But what about the adventure we wanted to go on?

I knew we must do it, or *maybe later*.

Chapter 14: Is Kriston

I didn't know what was going on. Nicole was worried. I was confused even though I wasn't. What was going on? Nicole definitely knew what was going on but she didn't know what would happen.

"I know who could help," I started. I was trying to tell her that maybe we should stop looking for clues and quit. But when the words came out of my mouth, I thought about Kayleigh. Nicole smiled. She knew what I was thinking.

"Let's go get Kayleigh," Nicole rushed. Now it was Abbie's turn to get confused. And yeah, she was 100 times 100 percent confused.

"Uhh, who exactly is this Kayleigh you're talking about?" Abbie asked.

"It's a dog that talks and knows the future, let's go!" I shouted. Abbie is so melted-Gucci (Something that I say when people don't understand things).

Anyways, Abbie froze in place not because she was scared, but because, well, she was just so confused!

"You'll see what I mean!" I laughed. Nicole laughed too. Well, I couldn't hear her because she was already running towards the forest, but I knew she was laughing.

I grabbed Abbie and ran as fast as I could towards Nicole and into the forest to where we saw Kayleigh. As we got closer, we saw Kayleigh wandering around.

“Kayleigh!” we all shouted. Kayleigh jumped in surprise.

“Riley and Nicole! I thought I would be able to see you guys again! And I did! I saw that you have brought your friend Abbie with you!” Kayleigh barked. I smiled. Kayleigh was always just so bright and happy!

“Uhh. Hey? How do you know my name is... Ohhh. So you are a fortune teller and you are a talking dog! That’s so cool!” Abbie shouted. Kayleigh told us she would never disappoint us in any way just with a smile! Right at that moment, I heard something. It was the footsteps again!

“Uhh, Nicole? Do you hear footsteps?” I asked. No sound. I started to panic.

“Abbie? Kayleigh? Anyone?” I cried. I was scared. Terrified. Probably even more than when I was scared to go to camp. I felt I had more power again. I could just...I could just...RUN.

The wind was blowing the tree branches against me but I didn’t feel pain. I only felt power. I didn’t know who was doing this but I didn’t have time to think. I was powerful.

Running to the campsite, I felt something pulling me up. Up. Up to the sky. I couldn’t breathe.

I knew it was Kriston and I didn’t know how he was doing this.

“You have come to my hands,” Kriston chuckled. I could not say anything, my mind was washed.

“Speak to me! Where is the pearl?” Kriston asked. I still couldn’t say anything. Was he talking about the pearl in the red booklet?

“How would I know! I have never seen any pearl,” I answered, annoyed. Of course, I had never seen any pearl. If I would, I would have kept it.

“Do not lie to me! You have the pearl. It’s still with you! Answer me or I’ll lock you up,” Kriston shouted. I didn’t know anything about the pearl. I couldn’t answer him.

“You do not speak. I will lock you up!” Kriston shouted. All I see was black after that. I heard some laughing too. But I only felt pain when Kriston threw me into the dungeon. It was blurry after that.

I could stand and fight back, but...*maybe later.*

Chapter 15: Is Grit in the Darkness

Down in the sewer smelling dungeon, the darkness blinded my eyes. The world seemed just like a round black dot. No sound. No sight. No thoughts. It was such a surprise since I think a lot.

I just wish there was something to see, something to hear and something to think about. All I could think about now was the darkness and the silence. But out of the corner of my eyes, I saw something moving. I froze. I heard a little rustling sound. Then I heard coughing sounds on the other side of the dungeon. This was so confusing! I asked myself a question: What makes sounds and is all around the room? I answered myself: A TEAM OF RATS! But luckily, I knew how to deal with rats.

“Hey! Come out of wherever you’re hiding!” I whispered. I heard a clicking sound followed by a shining light. What I saw was unexpected. I saw Nicole, Abbie, and Kayleigh holding a flashlight.

But that wasn’t why it was an unexpected scene. The weird part was that Abbie looked sick and hopeless and like she hadn’t drunk or eaten for a long time. Nicole looked hopeless but still healthy. Kayleigh looked so happy and cheerful. She looked like she just had the best time ever.

“Hi!” Kayleigh waved with sunshine in her eyes. It seemed like the weirdest thing in the whole universe.

“Hey! Question, why are you so happy and why does Abbie look like she has been in this dungeon for years?” I asked. Abbie looked at her feet and said nothing. Nicole wanted to speak but the only thing that came out of her mouth was air and not sound. Kayleigh perked up but didn’t know what to say.

Kayleigh thought for a moment and the only thing she said was, “umm.”

Nicole finally gave up holding the secret and let the secret out.

“Riley, the time in the dungeon goes much faster. Abbie got thrown in first so it meant she had spent the longest time in this dungeon. I got thrown in second so I didn’t spend as much time. Kayleigh well, she was thrown in last but she’s always happy, I guess,” Nicole explained. I kind of giggled at the part where Nicole said that Kayleigh was always happy. I guess that was true.

“If the time here is fast, how long did you and Abbie get thrown in for?” I asked. Nicole sighed. I could already see the answer in her sad, sad eyes.

“Abbie was here for years, I was here for months, Kayleigh was here for weeks, and you, well, days,” Nicole replied, still having that sad look in her eyes.

I got a bit confused and a bit annoyed.

“Why didn’t you guys get out?? Couldn’t you guys have gone the same way Nicole and I did when we got stuck?!” I asked, kind of annoyed. I was of course still sad and very worried.

“We couldn’t. Abbie was too sick to do anything, I was taking care of her and Kayleigh spent her time finding water and food,” Nicole replied, kind of annoyed herself. I thought for a moment. I knew we had to get out sometime. There has to be a way.

“We have to get out of here even though Abbie is sick. If we don’t then the time will go faster and we won’t have food and water for a long time. You can’t survive like this! We have to think!” I argued. I didn’t want to be mad, but I was mad at myself for not defeating Kriston. Nicole looked at Abbie.

“I could keep going if we all keep going. I could keep going if the world lets me go. I could keep going if my friends want me to go. I could keep going,” Abbie announced. I smiled. Nicole and Kayleigh smiled too.

“If you’re going, we are going too,” Kayleigh smiled. I knew the team would work.

“So what do you say, work hard to make the world a better place even though you are sick and uncomfortable?” I asked. I knew they would all agree. They all agreed without saying that they all agree.

“So let’s rock!” we all shouted. We burst out laughing right after. I didn’t want to say, “maybe later.” Well, *maybe later*.

Chapter 16: Is Sadness Sacrifice

It was hard work. Well, it wasn't physically hard work. The thing about our work was that we didn't actually do any work. All we did was sit there and think and talk.

"So, does anyone have any ideas? I am out of ideas. Don't ask me," Abbie whispered.

I was still thinking as hard as I could.

"I don't know, really. Nicole, you still have your flashlight, right? Use it to find some things here. It's too dark to even open your eyes," I said nervously. I was scared that Nicole wouldn't have the flashlight and we would be stuck in the dark again. Even if we had the flashlight, I would still be in the dark because I was used to the darkness now.

"I still have the flashlight, but how is that going to help us. Are we just going to walk around with the flashlight and find stuff?!" Nicole asked. I thought for a minute.

"Yeah, that is exactly what we are going to do..." I started. I knew it might be a little weird walking in the dark looking for nothing. But I thought we might find helpful things. *Or not.*

Nicole looked for the flashlight like crazy. Maybe she thought it would be helpful too.

I was getting a bit bored since we were just waiting around and Nicole still hadn't found the flashlight. Actually, that's what I felt, the time in this dungeon goes fast. Nicole probably took 30

seconds to find the flashlight. It felt like 1 year. Burning in my eyes, a light of happiness shone through me.

It was the most beautiful thing I had ever seen.

“I found the flashlight!” Nicole shouted with joy. I stared at the flashlight. To us, the flashlight was so bright it could compete with the sun. But to you, the flashlight might just be a speck of light.

“Wow. It’s so bright!” Kayleigh shouted. Right when Kayleigh said that, I thought of an idea.

I thought that if we reconnected the wires to something that was formed by the conception on Earth and one part of it has a shadow, it might create a massive reaction.

“I thought of another idea. If we connect the wires of the flashlight to something that is...” I started.

“That is formed by the conception on Earth and one part of it has a shadow!” Abbie ended.

I was surprised.

“Abbie, how did you know that was what I was going to say?!” I asked.

Abbie winked and answered, “I read minds.” It was an unbelievable sentence. A sentence that only a few would believe and lots would walk away.

“But what forms by the conception on earth and one part of it is shadow??” Nicole asked. I knew that question would be coming up.

“I know! Souls! Souls do! Wait! But how are we going to do it? Are we going to stab the wire into ourselves?! How are we going to do that?!” Kayleigh complained. It seemed like Kayleigh had gave us the answer. I nodded my head because I didn’t want to say what I was thinking.

“We’ll have to sacrifice someone to get us out of here. Kriston demands it,” Abbie explained. I didn’t want this to happen but it was happening. Everything was silent until Abbie broke the silence.

“I’ll sacrifice myself. I am already sick and tired, there’s no point for me to keep going,” Abbie whispered. I was shocked. Everyone was shocked. I guess it was true. I didn’t want her to do it, though. Abbie walked to the flashlight and took the wires out.

“No! Abbie don’t!” Kayleigh cried. Abbie shook her head. Feeling lost in the dungeon, I didn’t know what to say.

“No matter where you are, you will always be my friend,” Nicole cried.

“Bye,” I whispered. Abbie stabbed the wires into her arm and let out a blood-curdling scream. I could see tears in her eyes and glow in the wires. I didn’t want to cry. I tried not to. Maybe I will, or *maybe later...*

Chapter 17: Is Start to a New Challenge

Our last sight of Abbie was beautiful. Abbie disappeared and what was left was sparks of her soul. The door to the dungeon opened up. When we got outside, we felt so free. I looked up at the sky and saw the most beautiful thing. Abbie's face was in the clouds. I couldn't help it but shed a tear. Nicole and Kayleigh knew that what Abbie did was for us. I knew that too.

"We can't just stand here anymore. Let's take revenge on Kriston," I smiled. I wanted to do that for years already. I was sure Kriston would be delighted to play with us.

"How? What are we going to do?" Kayleigh asked.

"Maybe we can set up a fake business just for Kriston?" Nicole suggested. I was shocked that Nicole suggested that.

"That would be so dangerous," I replied. Nicole rolled her eyes. Now that I thought about it, I thought it wouldn't be that dangerous

"It will help us. I know it's dangerous but remember what Abbie did for us? We need to get Kriston," Nicole argued. I understood what Nicole was trying to express. I agreed with her. I was just a little scared.

“How are we going to do that?” Kayleigh asked. She was full of questions. That was one thing I liked about Kayleigh. I smiled and took out a book called “Programming in 5 Hours.”

“Let’s make a website,” I suggested. Now the fun was starting. I couldn’t believe it, this was literally the most exciting thing that had ever happened since camp had started!

“Now you get me,” Nicole smiled. It was going to be so fun! Well, hard work too.

We had to make a fake website in one night and advertise it to Kriston.

“Wait! But we need to catch Kriston’s eye. We need to know what he likes. What does he like anyway?” Kayleigh asked. Oh. OH. Why didn’t I think about that?! Nevermind. Still, it was a big problem. If we didn’t know what Kriston liked, we wouldn’t be able to make a website that he would trust. But I thought of something else. We were not supposed to know what he liked. We were supposed to know what he was obsessed with!

“No! We aren’t supposed to look for what he likes, we are supposed to look for what he is obsessed with!” I explained. I was so happy I thought of that idea. We’d be dead if we didn’t look for what he was obsessed with!

“Smart thinking! But that doesn’t exactly solve the problem of what he is obsessed with,” Kayleigh started. “Maybe we could... Oh! We could sneak into his room and see what we find. Anything can be a clue!”

Well, that was really smart thinking! I knew there wasn't much time. I told my friends that I would go to his room to find evidence. I was nervous on the way up to his room. Abbie got caught last time. There were a lot of chances for me to get caught. With sweetness and sadness from memory, I stepped slowly upstairs. I couldn't stop thinking about getting caught again and getting thrown in the dungeon again. I was thinking too much again. Every time I think too much, my mind was in a completely different place. I was now in Kriston's room. I guess this is it. This was the time.

I didn't know if I could do it or not.

It was going to be hard. But I needed to keep going. I needed to do this. It was now or never. I couldn't feel myself. Was I supposed to be scared? I didn't know. But I knew in this situation. I couldn't say, "maybe later." Well, *maybe later*.

Chapter 18: Is the Sighting

Kriston sounds like a nice name. But for me and my friends, Kriston was a name that if anyone mentioned it, we would run. It would have been even scarier if I had snuck into Kriston's room. But I was sneaking into Kriston's room. At that time, I was already in the room. Trembling with fear and being as careful as I could, I remembered something. Kriston had gone to the lake to swim, he might have been in the lake! I was so lucky that Kriston wouldn't be in the room for at least another 20 minutes. I started to search for things. What was I searching for anyway? I didn't know. Walking by the piles of books, I realized that every book that Kriston had read was about the underground: Underground City, Mystery Of the Underground, Under the World... I was super surprised to see Kriston was interested in the underground.

I walked around more to find more things. Bored by how boring Kriston's room was, I started to lose attention. I thought of Abbie and got back my focus. I looked for more things about the underground.

"Underground... Underground..." I mumbled. Trying to get in full focus mode, I searched every corner and every side of the room. I didn't find anything. Maybe I hadn't looked too closely. I tried to search again, but then I realized that Kriston might come back soon. The only clue I got was that Kriston was

interested in underground things. Maybe I could “borrow” one of his books.

Without too much thinking, I grabbed one of the underground books and ran outside and bumped into someone. I knew it was Kriston. And it WAS Kriston.

“What were you doing in my room?!” Kriston shouted. I gulped. A scene like this in a movie would be a cliffhanger if you turned off the TV. Well, I guess this movie wouldn’t be stopping. I hid the book.

“Umm, Betty asked me to go around each room to see if people have been packing up for when we leave... Which is... tomorrow?” I murmured. I hoped that he would believe me. If I didn’t, the same thing would happen over again and I’m sure you know what I mean.

“What have you got in your hand?” Kriston asked. I shivered. It wasn’t what he said that made me shiver. It was what I saw in the corner made me shiver. I could just think about how sad, how scary. It’s like something you wouldn’t want to see even though you haven’t seen it yet.

It was horrifying, scary, terrifying and all those words that mean the same thing as scary.

I didn’t want to look at it so I answered Kriston. Well, I sort of answered Kriston. Actually, I never answered his question. I found a way to get out of this situation.

“Look behind you Kriston! Our greatest fear has come true!” I shouted. There was a chance that Kriston would believe

me, but I didn't think the chances were high. I'm sorry if I didn't tell you this, there was a strange sight when we were playing in the lake. I will explain later. Kriston did believe me and guess what? He ran downstairs screaming like crazy.

“It's really him!!!!!!!!!!” Kriston screamed. I didn't want to wait for him to catch me either. I rushed downstairs as soon as Kriston went away. I'm not sure if it's actually him. I will tell you about what happened when we were swimming. It was scary. Super spine-chilling. I would like to tell you, I don't think you would handle the story. Well, I could tell you now. Maybe you might be scared. Or not. Or *maybe later...*

Chapter 19: Is Almost at the End

When I tell someone that I will tell them something, I keep that promise. In this case, I am going to tell you what happened. What is the scary mysterious thing under the lake?

Let me start from the top. When we were water fighting, I saw something in the water. I got scared and told Abbie about it. She didn't exactly believe me at first, though, but he did believe me when she saw the thing herself. Well, I know it might sound crazy but I saw a human under the water. I mean, seriously. Abbie saw it, Nicole saw it before she disappeared and Kriston also saw it! It was the most mysterious, scary thing I've ever seen in real life! The human was just underwater looking at me. I couldn't make out if it was a boy or a girl. It was definitely not a mermaid! It had seaweed on its hair and some plankton growing on its arms. It was a weird sight to see. Kriston stopped pushing people, all of us stopped doing what we were doing. After that, we started to see fingers on the SUP board. We didn't know what to do next so we started splashing each other and jumping on the board to make whatever that thing was to go away. Lucky for us, the human-like thing did go away so we kept playing like usual. It was scary and horrifying. Sometimes I do wonder what it was. Let's talk no more about this and let's get back to the story.

I went back to where my friends were. They were quite disappointed to see me come back so late.

“Oh, no. What’s wrong? I did get the clues to what he likes,” I murmured. I knew they still had an explanation for why they were disappointed.

“Nevermind. It’s just...nevermind,” Nicole sighed. With an excited jump, Kayleigh begged me to tell her what the clues were.

“OK, OK. Of course, I will tell you. Why wouldn’t I? Well, the clue is a little weird. I saw a bunch of books about the underground. And I...I stole one,” I murmured. My voice trailed off on the last sentence. I showed Nicole and Kayleigh the book and they froze. OK, well they didn’t actually freeze, they just didn’t move.

“OMG. I saw that book in the library! It was in the restricted section! All the books had locks on them, but this one didn’t,” Kayleigh shouted. I got a bit worried about what would happen next.

“I think Kriston might be...nevermind. Let’s make the fake website,” I started. The next three hours were quiet. I didn’t have anything to talk about or anything. It wasn’t because we were angry at each other but because we were afraid.

“Stop with the quietness now. There aren’t many things that would cause someone to sacrifice themselves,” I mumbled, not convincing myself either. Maybe I should have just given up. I didn’t know what to do either.

“OK, well, I think she is right. Let’s keep going and we are not going to quit. We are not going to stand here and say we can’t do it. Let’s get after it!” Nicole commanded. Now I am amazed by what she is saying. We all seemed kind of convinced. Well, if we had to, we would probably keep going. That’s what we all did. And yeah, we did get the website done and of course, we were super tired.

“OK, now, All we have to do is to advertise to Kriston. We can make a flyer and slip it under his door,” Kayleigh explained. It was exciting. It was fun. I was with my friends and all, but I was still thinking of Abbie. She was so brave to do that. We had to take revenge on Kriston.

“Woohoo! We finished the flyer! Now let's slip it under that door!” Kayleigh shouted. She was so happy. Well, everyone was happy. It was something we had wanted to do for a long time. We had wanted to get to the end of the game. I was happy. Or was I?

I shouldn’t say “maybe later” now. *Maybe later...*

Chapter 20: Is Another Trap

I had to do it again. Go to Kriston's door. Well, I was lucky that I didn't have to go into his room.

I walked towards his door. It was already midnight. Good thing he was sleeping. Well, I should say snoring. That thought made almost made me laugh, which would have woken everyone up. My hands were wobbly when I passed the flyer under the door. But I did it anyway. My hands were so wobbly, my hands crashed into the door and made a super loud noise. I was so scared and didn't know what to do. Only one thing came up to my mind: RUN. I did run and I was so happy I got out in time. All my friends were waiting in my room.

“Great news! Kriston has subscribed to our website! Now we can beat him easily!” Nicole shouted excitedly. I was surprised that Kriston found the flyer so quickly.

“OK. Good. All we have to do is ask him a few questions and, well, find a place to finish him and...” I gobbled. I was probably too excited and yeah, it was really hard for a camp to be this crazy.

“Calm down. We have his position and everything we need to take him out. But only one problem. How are we going to take him out?” Kayleigh asked. I had no idea but I only knew one way to reply.

“We will know when we get there. Because there is only one way,” I replied. I didn’t know if that was a relevant answer or was that an answer that wouldn’t help. Or was that an answer that was mostly correct. I had no idea. The only thing I knew is that we were not ready for the moment yet. Nobody wanted to go against Kriston. Well not yet at least.

“Oh! More great news! I just downloaded this tracking device and tracked Kriston! It looks like he is going to the woods. Well, I’ll just have to add another tracker on Riley,” Nicole explained.

“Why would I need a tracker?” I asked, puzzled. It is rare to put a tracker on yourself.

“You’re going first to find Kriston. Kayleigh and I have to do something,” Nicole replied. I sighed. I didn’t know what my friends were doing or if they were doing a trick on me. Well, they wouldn’t do a trick on me. Or would they? I had no idea. It was almost the end of summer camp, I didn’t know what to expect. I only knew that I was supposed to be brave and walk in the mysterious forest. I had to since I was alone now and my friends had already left.

Holding my breath, I walked slowly into the woods. Trees clattered around me. The wind howled and screamed. I let my breath out thinking that this wasn’t so bad. Cautiously, I stepped slowly towards where I saw the big rock. Crunch. I stepped on something, I didn’t want to look.

“It’s just a leaf” I thought. Still shivering, I kept walking and walking and walking. But I had to stop.

I saw something. It was a rock. But it changed. The rock wasn’t as scary looking anymore. My hands went caressed the smooth rock. It wasn’t as wet anymore. Was this a trap? I looked around finding nothing related to traps. Or was this a... As I thought about that, a giant metal cage fell on top of me. I was stuck in this metal cage. This was the second time I was stuck. What a trap!

I didn’t know what to do. But Nicole and Kayleigh put a tracker on me. They could find me! All I have to do is trigger the help alarm that is set on the tracker! I looked for the help alarm and pushed the button. Nothing. The alarm was supposed to let Nicole and Kayleigh connect to me and send a message. I waited and waited. Still nothing. I tried triggering the alarm a few more times. Nothing. There was nothing I could do. I waited in the cage. I could have been brave and tried to break out. Well, all I could say was...*maybe later...*

Chapter 21: Is Start of the Fight

Did you know that butterflies can only fly once in their whole lives? Well, scientifically that's not true since butterflies need to eat and go to flower to flower. This story is not about butterflies but I was just trapped in another cage. I had no story to write. I thought about everything I knew. Anything that would get me OUT OF THIS CAGE. I couldn't take it. I triggered the alarm about 256 times! There was no reply. I'll just have to keep talking about butterflies.

But do you want to hear more about butterflies or should I tell you the rest to the story? Well, if you want to keep listening to the story and not butterflies, please share this story to a friend. Anyways, let me keep going with the story. I know I said I was trapped and I was so bored. Well, I didn't say that but you know that I was bored, right? But right when I started to think about pink and yellow butterflies, I saw a shadow.

"Hello?" I asked. My voice echoed through the forest. Another shadow appeared. I stepped back. With no warning, a giant figure jumped on me.

"Woah!" I shouted. A giant tiger appeared in front of my eyes. The two shadows appeared to be Nicole and Kayleigh. Nicole and Kayleigh were tied up with ropes. They couldn't move. A third shadow appeared behind Nicole and Kayleigh. Oh, no! Kriston!

“You think you know your trick well enough that it would trick me, huh? The only reason I subscribed to your website was so I could track you! This is now the last place you’ll ever see. End of story,” Kriston grinned.

“Of course we know our tricks! You think you know your tricks?” I said unconfidently. That was the worse fight back ever! Kriston laughed.

“Leave your tears for later. The tiger that jumped on you is the person who you miss most. Now she’s mine,” Kriston laughed again. I stopped. The person who I miss the most...

“Abbie! No! It couldn’t be!” I screamed. “It could be...” I thought again. There wa no way...

“Yes. It could be. Remember? The way to get out of that dungeon was to give me what I wanted. I wanted a sacrifice. But you didn’t know what else I wanted. I have the power to control her and there’s nothing you can do,” Kriston explained. There was nothing I could do. There was nothing I could do. He was right.

“Now, I want you to see the power of the new Abbie. Get her,” Kriston ordered. I was stuck by the edge of the cage. Abbie, who was now the tiger, was coming closer to me. Closer and closer. I couldn’t think anymore! Just right then, I spotted Nicole trying to get the rope off herself. She untied the rope and then helped Kayleigh to untie her rope! I was just about to give her a thumbs up when a loud “POW” thundered in my ears. I realized

that Nicole jumped and gave Kriston one of her famous karate kicks. Kriston smashed into the wall and fell on the floor.

“Good one, Nicole!” Kayleigh and I complimented. Nicole made a “whatever, I’m not that good” face.

“Yeah, that was...” Nicole started, looking sad, but then changed her expression, “super-duper Gucci!” That was even better than Gucci!

“Slow down. Not time to celebrate yet. I got up, so you have to fight me,” Kriston growled and suddenly stood up. I knew it was fight time. I hadn’t fought with a real bad guy before. It was dance-fight time. I didn’t know what would come against me. But I knew I wouldn’t talk about butterflies this time. Or, *maybe later.*

Chapter 22: Is Just a Leap of Faith

“I just want to go back to bed. Why is this taking so long?!” I asked. I knew that I was supposed to help Nicole and Kayleigh fight but I was just so tired. I did want to help but I just didn’t know what to do, or...maybe I was just scared. Well, nervous.

“It’s not time to be lazy! OK, I know I’m also scared but give it a try. It’s also my first time defeating a real bad guy but I am giving it a try. If we don’t give anything a try, we will never discover anything. Just remember, Abbie is in the tiger. She is there all the time. Do it. Do it for her. For us,” Nicole explained. I didn’t know what to do except...

“Fine, I’ll do it,” I replied. Kriston was all ready to fight and looked like he had fought before. But he wasn’t doing any fight positions or practicing on his own. I wondered how he would fight.

“Now you guys don’t know what I do. And what I do is not what you do. It’s stronger. Be careful. I am giving you one chance to say you give up and leave, or else...” Kriston explained.

Kayleigh rolled her eyes and mumbled something to herself. I had no idea what Kriston was talking about. “What he does?” What does that mean?

“Go for it!” Kayleigh growled. Kriston stepped forward and did nothing. He looked around and stepped back.

“What is he doing?” I whispered to Nicole and Kayleigh. Kayleigh shrugged. Just before Nicole answered, Kriston swiped his hand up and caused Nicole to slam into the walls of the dungeon. Nicole fell down all hurt.

“Now you see my thing? Normal people versus magical people. It’s not a match,” Kriston laughed. Kayleigh got angry and jumped on Kriston, making him unable to see.

“You’re only magical because you made people give you power! You didn’t earn it!” Kayleigh shouted. I didn’t want to do anything. I was too afraid. I walked to Nicole and helped her up.

“How does he...? How can he do that?!” Nicole asked. I closed my eyes and shook my head like I was saying “I don’t know. Sorry that I can’t help.”

Nicole stood up ready to fight again. As Kriston shook Kayleigh off, Nicole tripped him and made him fall to the floor.

“Ha! Take that Kriston!” Nicole laughed. But as soon as Nicole took a break to laugh, Kriston stood up and once again use his magic to slam Nicole into the walls. This time, Nicole looked so ready to fight when she fell. I stood there watching Kayleigh and Nicole take turns trying to fight Kriston. Kriston looked at me and snickered.

“What are you doing there scaredy-cat? Come and fight me,” Kriston snickered again.

I rolled my eyes and looked at Kayleigh and Nicole who were badly hurt.

Normal people vs magical people. It's not a match. What are you doing, scaredy-cat?

You guys don't know what I do. It's stronger. The voices floated through my mind. I couldn't take it. I looked back to Nicole and Kayleigh, who were suffering from the pain of his magic. I couldn't take it. No, I wouldn't allow it. I closed my eyes and felt the power. Without a thought, I flew up to the sky and fired 10 fireballs in a row. Kriston fell to the floor with a BANG.

"Kriston. I'm not a scaredy cat. I just want to let you suffer a bit before we take you out," I explained. That was the only way to let him know I wasn't scared.

"Wow! Riley, how did you do that?" Nicole and Kayleigh asked. I shrugged with an "I have no idea what just happened!" look.

I really had zero idea of what happened. But I knew that Nicole and Kayleigh would get the powers too. Or just *maybe later...*

Chapter 23: Is Power On

Kriston. He got his power to destroy. But I got mine to destroy him. Why did he get powers when he's so bad?

"Riley, What did you..." Nicole started. "Wait a second. Why are you moving so slowly? This is weird. Am I moving too fast?"

I felt like Nicole was moving much faster than anyone else was.

"I think you... You might also... Like me..." I stuttered. I had no idea how to explain to Nicole that she had the power too.

"I have the power too! Wait, does Kayleigh have too?" Nicole asked me. I looked at Kayleigh who was on the ground. Her ears turned different, spikey and...

"Wow! Kayleigh! You turned into a... a...dragon!" I gasped. Kayleigh breathed fire in surprise.

Kriston stood up, surprised by our powers.

"How? How could you?" Kriston gasped incredulously. Without a thought, Kriston used his magic to slam me into the walls. But luckily, I had time to shoot a few fireballs at Kriston. This time he didn't fall to the ground.

"It's not easy to make me fall. Try again," Kriston snickered as he made me stick to the walls.

Nicole speed ran at Kriston. He tried to control Nicole with his "Magic" but Nicole kept speed running away.

“Kayleigh! Is there any way you can try to eat him? I know it sounds ridiculous but...” I started. Kayleigh looked at me weird.

“How can I ever eat him?! He will blow me up! At least I can scratch his head off,” Kayleigh joked. I laughed. Kriston stood up every time we tried to attack him. I used my hands to set the dungeon on fire.

“Kriston, take this now!” I shouted as the fire grew bigger and bigger. The fire went over his head and collapsed on top of him. He fell to the ground.

“You put this thing on fire?! You’re on fire!” Nicole exclaimed. Kriston stood up just in time to slam me into the walls. This time I didn’t fall. I was stuck in the walls. Tiger Abbie, looked at us in fear. Watching us.

“ I told you! You’re not powerful. None of you are. You are just people. Now I give you another chance to give up. Do you?” Kriston asked. I tried to get away from Kriston’s power. But his power was just getting stronger and pushing me into the walls.

“ No, we don’t,” Kayleigh replied. She bit Kriston in the neck but Kriston recovered right away. Kriston used his powers to push Kayleigh into the walls.

Nicole tried to karate kick his face again but Kriston just pushed her into the walls.

“Now, do you give up?” Kriston asked with an evil smile on his face. I looked at Nicole, Nicole looked at Kayleigh, Kayleigh looked at tiger Abbie sitting on the side.

I didn't know what to do. Should I keep going? I was too tired to answer. Just...*maybe later*...

Chapter 24: Is the Last Power

“Do you?” Kriston asked again. I felt weak and unable to answer his question. What if I did give up? I would have to give Abbie to Kriston forever. But I wouldn’t get hurt anymore. If I didn’t, I might get hurt and my friends and I might not win.

“Do you think we should give up?” Kayleigh asked. I sighed, knowing that it might be the only way.

“I don’t know. But we have to save Abbie, right? Destroying Kriston is the only way. Abbie sacrificed herself to save us. She knew that we would be OK. Now she’s in the tiger. There is a chance,” Nicole explained. I didn’t know what to say.

“But what if we lose this fight. I mean, Kriston is really strong and if we lose, the results will be worse,” I replied. I didn’t know what to do. We were all sad.

“No. We have to do this,” Nicole suddenly said. Her hands opened. A light came out of her hands. Kayleigh and I opened our hands and more light came out. The lights grouped together and shot directly at Kriston. The light kept shooting from our hands while Kriston used his power to hold us back.

“Abbie, I’m sorry. If I lose, you won’t be back. I’m so sorry. It’s my fault,” I cried. The light grew stronger.

“Abbie, I’m sorry. For all those times that I held you back. I’m so sorry. It’s my fault,” Nicole cried. The light got brighter.

“Abbie, I’m sorry. I should’ve told you about your future to help you. I’m so sorry. It’s my fault,” Kayleigh cried. The light got bigger.

“Thank you. I’m sorry too. For letting you down. It’s OK. Keep going. We can do this,” a voice said. The light got stronger, brighter, bigger. The tiger disappeared and a girl appeared by my friends and my side. It was Abbie. Her hands shot out gold light. The light mixed into our bright white light and the light turned stronger. With a flash, everything turned normal. There was no more dungeon. No more forests. Most importantly, no more Kriston. We were back in our rooms.

“Hey. How did it...” I asked. Nicole looked at me and Abbie. We all laughed.

“Where’s Kayleigh?” Abbie asked nervously. I looked around the room. I looked outside the window. The forest. She was gone.

“ Maybe she’s just imaginary. Someone to remind us to keep going. To help us too,” Nicole explained. I shrugged.

“Or maybe she went to help other explorers. Help them to win,” Abbie guessed.

Shrugged again. It was a mystery. Where did Kayleigh go?

“Will you miss her?” I asked. Abbie smiled.

“Of course I’ll miss her!” Abbie replied. I smiled too. I felt lost without Kayleigh to help. But I also felt stronger.

“Yeah. I wish she has a happy time helping others,” Nicole wished. We all wished the same thing.

Everything was back to normal. No shadows in the bushes. No train crashes when we went back home on the train. Just normal. Well, except for the extra ride to the police station. Kriston disappeared because of us. This is our secret, and we swore we would never tell. Luckily, we found Kriston running around in the streets. My friends and I almost laughed. My friends kept in contact. We promised that if there were any more people to defeat, we must stick together. We must make the decisions together. We can't lose another person. I could stop saying "maybe later" now. Or, *maybe later*.

Epilogue:

After the super fun, weird summer camp, my friends and I got together again for a little celebration.

It was not a big celebration. Just a little one. With a giant movie screen at my rented house, popcorn, blankets, drinks, and friends. It was the perfect little celebration.

“What do you guys want to watch?” I asked. Abbie shrugged.

“How about ‘Summer Mystery’? It’s about some friends at a summer camp that turned into an adventure,” Nicole suggested. I looked at her feeling weird and surprised. I took a piece of popcorn and popped it into my mouth.

“Doesn’t that sound a LOT like our story?” I asked. Nicole smiled. Abbie took a piece of popcorn and popped it into her mouth.

“Doesn’t that sound a LOT like the best story?” Abbie imitated. I rolled my eyes as we laughed. “Hey, What school are you guys going to after this summer?” Nicole asked.

“I’m going to TASOH. I don’t know what it stands for though,” Abbie answered. I was shocked.

“I’m probably going there too!” I gasped. Nicole had a sad face.

“But...I’m also going there!” Nicole laughed. It was lucky that the three of us could gather together again.

I wished that there wasn't any more dangerous stuff left. But there would still be adventures. I didn't know what would happen next. But I knew one thing. I would never have to say "maybe later" anymore.

Because I understood. I understood why I always said, "maybe later." It was because I was afraid. Yeah. I was afraid of what would happen next. But everyone is afraid of what might happen next. We just have to trust ourselves. Trust yourself. It's going to be fine. It's just a way of life.

A normal camp with normal people. Or is it a nightmare camp?



Before *Maybe Later* started, Riley went through a fun and scary camp too! When she started to write *Maybe Later*, she was sometimes out of the real world! Like any other authors, she sometimes gets distracted or doesn't want to keep writing. But with all the support of friends and families and all the asking, she continues to write this magical adventure. Be sure to ask Riley about *Diaries of Adventures: The One and Only's* (Her next book)! Next time she won't be suffering "WritingLaziness" by herself! Secret helpers are going to help her. When you see her, ask her "When is the next book coming out??" She'll probably work harder than she usually does!