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Monroe Middle School
Entering 8th grade
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Everything was quiet and empty. The light was fading, shining its last rays of light on the rows of books. I sighed and bent down on the counter, surveying the empty room. Suddenly, I heard a noise, a light noise, like someone turning a page. Startled, I looked up. I was sure I was alone. Going down the fiction section on the very end, almost hidden, was a hunched figure.

“Hello?” I called softly.

Startled the figure looked up. Instinctively, I froze. Looking back at me was a boy with silver hair falling down his face. But that wasn't what made me freeze. His eyes were almost perfectly white. I could barely see his pupils. This made him look ghostly with his pale skin.

“Um, the library is closing in ten minutes,” I said.

“May I finish this?” His voice sounded like the wind, screeching against the window. I tensed up, my instincts telling me to run.

“Uh, sure,” I stammered.

This wasn't the first time this had happened. A few days before, I had also encountered another strange person.

Everyone I knew was back in the city. But, my mom came to this old, creepy town. After much complaining, I got this part-time job at this library. No one ever came, though. But, I loved it. It was an old building, homey, and apart from the whimsical weird person, this job was wonderful.

Light footsteps took me out of my daze. I turned around and there he was standing staring blankly at me.

“Did you finish what you read?” I asked to break the tense silence.

“No” he answered and frowned.

“Would you like to check it out?”

He smiled. “No were not allowed.” As if that explained everything.

I stared, “Huh?”

“May I come later?” he asked.

I looked at him for a second. He must have strict parents.

“Sure. You are welcome. You can keep me company.” I smiled. It did get boring.

He looked shocked. “Very well,” he turned around and walked out. I closed down everything and went home.

“Anything interesting happen today?” Mom asked while we were eating dinner. I was about to tell her I had met this strange boy when I had a tugging in my stomach like before something bad was going to happen.

“Oh, no. Actually it was pretty empty today” I lied.

The next morning I was looking through some old books that weren’t in the bookshelf.

“Hello,” soft was the wind. Caught by surprise, I jumped, and there he was standing as if he was here a long while ago.

“Oh, it’s you,” I said surprised. “You scared me.” I laughed. Really, I was getting too jumpy. Then I saw his expression. He looked as if he was in pain. But, in a flash, it was gone. Maybe I was turning crazy?

“Do you need assistance?” He talked slowly as if he hadn’t done it in a while and spoke with an old kind of English, or it seemed like it. As if from the 1800s. It was probably my imagination again.

“No, it’s OK. I was just finishing.”

“Do you have anything else to do?” he asked.

“No.”

“Would you like to read?”

I frowned. “You mean aloud to you?”

He looked thoughtful for a second. “If you don’t have anything else, I would be very glad.”

“Sure,” I said brightly. Some company would be great. The hours passed like that-me reading and him sitting, always thoughtful. I never did learn much about him. He was quiet and speculative.

He had spent the next few days with me. I had just finished the book. He smiled. Wow! I had never got much more than an almost-grin from him.

“Thank you,” he said. “Thank you so much.”

I smiled. “Glad to be of assistance. Will you be here tomorrow?” I asked.

“No,” he looked sad. “I am leaving.”

“Leaving?” I stared. “Why? Where? I didn’t realize you didn’t live here.”

“No,” he said, as if explaining to a child. “I live here, have lived here, but I am required to be someplace else-somewhere I haven’t wanted to go before.” He smiled and blushed. “Well, uh, goodbye,” he said. “Don’t worry! We’ll meet again.”

“Bye!” I said sadly. I had really enjoyed his company. Then, he walked out.

The next morning, something had happened. All the books were gone. So was the furniture, and the inside looked ancient. I walked out, stopped an old woman, pointed to the library, and said, “What happened? Did it close?”

She looked at me for a second. “Honey,” she paused. “That library hasn’t been open for sixty years.”