

Fourth Forest

Hidden Beneath The Surface



Grade	<u>7</u>
Fiction	<u>✓</u>
Poetry	<u> </u>
Nonfiction	<u> </u>

Everything was dark, cold, and empty. Where was I? I couldn't talk, move. I couldn't do anything. Just stare in the dark emptiness of my mind. Then it hit me, all my memories. Like a landslide, they all came crashing into me. When I was a child, my school days, all my friends, and my mom. But, then more entered my mind, ones I didn't know I had. A nine-tailed fox, a forest, a girl with long curly hair, kids running through a camp, and a man. The other people and animals in my memories gave me a reassuring feeling. A feeling of hope, comfort, and safety. But this man, he was much different. The energy around him felt dark, despicable, and corrupt. Who was this man? Why was he in my memories? Before anything could be answered, a bright light filled my vision as all my memories I had watched like a movie, disappeared. Suddenly I heard voices, but it was incomprehensible until I heard, "Robin! She's waking up!" A girl yelled my name in the distance. I slowly opened my eyes. Everything was slightly blurry. The only thing I could make out was a girl with long flowing hair. Another silhouette came into my vision. They wore what I guessed was some kind of dress. Slowly my vision unblurred as I stared at a woman with blonde hair and sharp golden eyes. She starred in my grey ones with her glowing ones. "Robin, is it?" asked the blonde woman.

I nodded and she smiled at me. "Wonderful! We've had quite a load of kids in here. I mean, it is winter, and kids love to get hurt in all sorts of ways, but I have to ask your name 'cause of the number of kids that look like you." She said cheerfully.

I could now make out what she was wearing. A long white dress and a light brown coat with fur on the hood of it. The woman's dress had flower patterns all over it. Suddenly a gust of cold wind ran through the room we were in. A shiver ran down my spine as I pulled the covers over me to try and keep warm, but failed miserably.

"Riverian, close the door! You're letting all the warm air out!" The woman yelled. I came to realize she had a slight Australian accent. A door shut and soon there was warmth again. I uncovered myself and saw a guy with jade-colored hair starting a fire.

"Here you go, Ms. Verin! Warm clothes to change into." The woman said smiling.

I got up, grabbing the bag. I looked around trying to find a bathroom or something.

"Bathrooms out that door and 5 doors to your left on the right." The man named Riverian said to me as he looked out a window and into the white snowstorm that was blowing around outside.

I thanked him and left the room. The hallway I had entered was lit by many scented candles that illuminated the baby blue walls. I started walking to the left and counted doors till I made it to the second to last one. I stood in front of a window that gave me a clear view of the snowstorm releasing heavy snow onto the ground outside and the house. The house creaked and moaned as the violent wind threatened to tear the house to shreds. I quickly made my way into the bathroom and shut the door behind me. After locking it, I looked into the bag and saw a pair of jeans and a beige colored sweater with slate-colored lines on it. I quickly changed into the warm clothes and stared at myself in the mirror. My hair looked as if and a bird had created a nest in it. "Oh, lovely," I said to myself as I started brushing it. It was surprisingly clean and not greasy. I put it into a braid and turned the braid into a bun. I stared at myself in the mirror. My brown hair was finally neat and my grey eyes didn't look as tired as I thought they would. I quickly grabbed the empty bag that carried the clothes and walked back to the room with Riverian and the other woman. As I entered the room I found none of them there. I left and shut the door. As I started to walk around the house I made it to what looked like an entrance hall. Two huge oak doors, which I assumed was the front door, stood tall in front of me. The walls were pine green with golden engravings in them. I saw a glass door to the left of the entrance that seemed to call to me. Walking over to it, I noticed two shadows. I looked through the glass to see no one in the room but questioned whether I should still go in after I saw the shadows.

"Robin? What are you doing by that door?" I turned around to see the blonde woman. She looked at me with what looked like a mix between a surprised and angry expression.

"Oh, sorry Ms?"

"Call me Viviana, and it's fine, just," she walked over to me and turned the door handle to find it unlocked. "Don't go in here. Now, go find Riverian, he made some lunch for us." Viviana said as she took out a pair of keys and locked the door using one with a diamond on it.

After looking around the house I found Riverian sitting in a huge library. The room was filled with books of all shapes, colors, and sizes. He sat in a lounge chair reading an old brown book that had parts of the cover tearing apart. "Hi," I said awkwardly as I walked up to him. He stared up at me with black eyes. I now could see a huge scar that went from his forehead to his neck.

"Hello Robin, I made tuna and seaweed sandwiches. They're on the counter in the kitchen." Riverian said blankly as he went back to his room.

I turned and started walking but quickly turned towards Riverian again to ask where the kitchen was, but when I did, I saw he was gone. Once again, I looked around the house as if I was playing hide and seek, checking every room until I found the kitchen. As I opened the door, my eyes found their way to a fox's purple ones, or what I thought was a fox. Whatever it was, it sat on the counter with its nine grey tails that faded to purple, similar to its ears and torso that also faded to purple.

"Robin!" the fox suddenly yelled as it threw itself at me. It started to cry and talk incoherent words. "Are you okay Robin! I failed you and everyone else. I'm a horrible Familiar!" the creature said as it sobbed.

Familiar? That word sounded so weird, but familiar at the same time. Like I've heard it before but where, and when?

"I'm sorry, but have we meant before?" I asked the creature. It stared up at me with its sad purple eyes.

If even possible, even more tears filled the creature's eyes. "Don't you remember me? I'm Silver Paws, your Familiar?" The creature whose name was Silver Paws asked me with concern in its voice.

I shook my head slowly as I felt sad for the fox creature.

"Maybe if I introduce myself more..... Robin, I'm Silver Paws, your familiar. A creature that protects you at all times and never leaves your side. I help with your power. I'm a kitsune."

As soon as Silver Paws said 'kitsune' I suddenly felt sad and happy at the same time. Silver Paws, I remembered him now! "I've missed you, Silver Paws," I said as tears flowed down my face like Niagara Falls. Silver Paws' face was soaking from how much he cried. I hugged the soft kitsune, forgetting what I entered that room to do.

"Aren't you hungry? You must be! You were asleep for 6 months!" Silver Paws said as he wiped tears out of his eyes with his purple paw.

I nodded my head violently as I looked around the room, soon finding a pile of sandwiches on a plate. Quickly making my way over, I grabbed a sandwich and

started eating it. "So you're telling me, I was asleep from July 24 to December 24- IT'S CHRISTMAS EVE!!!" I yelled all of the sudden. I didn't even realize it before, but Viviana stood in the doorway shaking her head lightly. Silver Paws saw the woman and hopped down from the counter to go and greet her.

"Why hello there Silver. I see you found Robin, alive and well." Vivian stated as she scratched the area behind Silver Paw's ear.

"So it's Christmas tomorrow? If that's so, why aren't there any decorations up?" I asked Viviana.

She looked up at me and sighed. She then motioned me to follow her, which is what I did. She led to the front doors where decorations were hung. Candles with green and red flames sat in the windows as Christmas lights hung above the doorway. Golden and silver tinsel was hanging from the chandelier above me. There were tiny evergreens in pots next to the doorway with a star on both. Ornaments and tinsel decorated the little evergreens' branches. In a room right of the entrance was even more Christmas decorations, including a giant evergreen tree that stood tall with only tinsel on it.

"We're still decorating this room, but the rest of the house is ready for the holiday," Viviana said as she took out a small wand and pointed it at the tinsel. The tinsel flew out of the room and started wrapping itself around the railing of the two stairs that sat on either side of the entrance hall.

"Wait you said 'we're' is Riverian helping?" I asked.

Viviana shook her head and pointed to a glass door that had markings embedded into the glass which caused it to be a bit blurry so I couldn't see in detail what was in the room, but I saw a small silhouette glide across the room. As I slowly made my way to the glass door, the silhouette glided back and forth across the room, but suddenly, another, much skinnier silhouette appeared. I quickly opened the door, fearful of what sight might be on the other side.

"Oh, sup Robin." A girl with curly brown hair said to me. Her sharp emerald eyes stared at me than past me, to something behind me.

"I see you have met Elian before?" Viviana's voice erupted behind me.

I quickly turned to look at Viviana who had pieces of tinsel stuck in her golden hair.

"Well, I don't know if I have before. Ever since I woke up I've had a hard time remembering people." I explained looking down at my bare feet on the wooden floor. The floor reflected the heavy snow that was falling and the dark grey clouds that were slowly moving in.

"I see, and that can happen. You have strong magic in you and since you don't know how to control it, it can cost you," Viviana paused and took out a wand. With a simple wave of her wand, a cat made of black dust appeared and floated around the room. Soon it disappeared and Viviana became tired.

"You see? After summoning that shadow, I felt tired, it cost me something to do that, but with practice, you'll be able to do a lot of things, Robin." Viviana let out a yawn and excused herself from the room. After she left, Elian went back to decorating the room which I assumed was the kitchen.

"So, how have you been?" I asked Elian, trying to loosen the tight atmosphere. She didn't answer. I wanted to ask again, but at the same time, I didn't, fearful I may irritate her.

"I'm okay, just busy right now. Could you by chance hand me the box of ornaments over there?" Elian asked as she taped paper snowflakes to the baby blue walls.

I looked across the kitchen to see a plain purple box. Walking over to it, I felt like someone was watching me. I looked over to Elian's deer, which was sound asleep on the hardwood floor. I then looked out the glass door, there was a shadow. A shadow of a person stood in the living room doorway. The shadow slowly got smaller and smaller, like whoever was around the corner was leaving. Gathering all the courage I had in my body, I ran to the living room doorway, ready to face whoever was around the corner. Turning the corner I was surprised to see no one.

"What in the world?" I asked myself as I checked the entire entrance hall. No one. There was no one. The whole hall was quiet, not even a mouse made a peep. I took deep breaths to try and calm myself down. Maybe some of the decorations made the shadow? But that doesn't explain how it moved. So what was that? With all

the questions spiraling in my head, I didn't hear Elian who had been calling my name for the past 2 minutes.

"Robin.....Robin.....Robin! Where are you? I kind of need those ornaments right about now!" Elian yelled from the kitchen. After breaking myself from my thoughts, I returned to the kitchen. After quickly grabbing the purple box, I ran over to Elian.

"I'm so sorry! I just thought I saw something." I said to Elian. She accepted my apology and the box. After all of that, I helped her tape the snowflakes to the walls.

"I think I saw a shadow of a person, but when I went to check, no one was there. What do you think it was? Maybe some of the decorations made the shadow?" I explained to Elian. She didn't say anything. She just kept decorating the kitchen.

"Hey, did you hear me?" I asked her. Once again, she ignored me. Sighing I just continued helping her decorate the kitchen. Suddenly, images started flashing in my head like a light bulb going out. The images showed me walking through a rainbow forest with Silver Paws. All the trees illuminated the path both of us were walking on. It was slightly drizzling as we walked through the woods. I could hear Silver Paws saying something, but it was very muffled. We continued to walk until we reached this cave. Both of us walked inside and behind us, vines slowly crept over the entrance until it was completely covered. Silver Paws and I continued until we reached a stone with these markings. Silver Paws touched the markings and they began to glow and slowly the stone glowed brightly until disappearing leaving a white light which they went into. After they both went into the light, it disappeared, leaving me in total darkness. Until I opened my eyes to find myself in a bedroom. The house was violently being shaken by the wind outside as the storm outside grew stronger. I couldn't tell whether it was night or day out because of the dark clouds outside, but after looking around, I found a clock that said it was midnight. I got out of bed and quickly made my way to the door. I was about to open the door when light passed under it. I opened the door and peered out. I saw Viviana talking to someone, but I couldn't see the person she was talking to.

"How is she?" The person in the shadows asked.

"Quite well, considering she was asleep for that long," Viviana answered. There was an emotion in her voice that I couldn't quite put my finger on. She sounded, really annoyed and at the same time something else.

"But it wasn't part of the plan to keep her alive." The person in the shadows said. Viviana sighed and glared into the shadows where the hidden figure was.

"I know that, but I have a plan. Tell the big man to mind his own business and I'll tell him when my mission is complete." Viviana said and quickly walked towards my room. I quickly shut the bedroom door and ran to the bed. As I quickly pulled the sheets over me the door opened.

"I'm sorry Robin, but you got in our way." Viviana sighs sadly as she blew out the candle she held and left. I listened as her footsteps got farther and farther away before getting back up.

"Maybe I should tell Elian about what happened?" I asked myself. After thinking for a bit, I quickly left the room. The hallway was quiet and cold from the storm outside. The nightgown I was wearing didn't help either. As I walked down the hall, there was a little flickering light that could barely be seen from under a doorway. As I walked up to the door and touched the knob, the air around me grew colder. Taking in a deep breath I opened the door with a loud creak. A little lightbulb above me was slowly swaying from side to side.

"That is just lovely, I'm going-" Before I finished I heard someone whisper my name. As I stared down into the darkness, the door behind me shut. The stairs below me started creaking as if someone was walking up them. My breathing quickened and became heavier.

"Robin chill. It's only me, Elian. I found something quite reassuring." Elian said as she grabbed my hand and pulled me down into the darkness. We both ran by many crates and what looked like stacks of books.

"So while I was snooping around this place, I found this." We stopped in front of a board that had multiple pictures with strings attached to each one. Little notes were also scattered around the board. All were in some sort of language I couldn't read, except for one note but it just read blow it up.

"Elian what does this all mean?" I asked her.

Elia turned and looked at me with a scared expression. "It means that the camp is doomed. You remember the camp right?" Elia asked me.

After thinking for a bit, it all came back to me. "The Shadow King was trying to take control of the forest for all these years, but the only way he can do that is by destroying Camp Amethyst, but why the camp?" I asked.

"Because the camp created a whole forest around the place to protect it from the King. If he destroys the camp then he has easier access to the crystal under it. If he gets to the crystal he'll corrupt it. Then he'll...." Elia stopped herself and looked down.

"He'll what, Elia?" She looked up and stared me dead into the eye.

"He'll finally take control of this world and yours." Elia finished. My eyes widened at her words. She quickly ran past me and out of the room. Following behind her, I continued asking questions. She ran upstairs to her room and grabbed coats.

"Put it on, we're going outside," Elia stated as she put on the coat and left the room. After putting the coat on myself, I followed her. After putting boots on, we went outside only to be greeted by strong winds and cold temperatures. We walked through and into the woods that were surrounding the house. We kept walking until we were met by a narrow entrance to a cave in the ground. Elia went up to the entrance and looked into it. She pulled a small flashlight out of her pocket and pointed it down the hole. I walked up to the cave entrance as well and looked down at it. There was ice covering every inch of it.

"It's down here," Elia said as she sat down on the ice and started to slide down into the cave. I followed behind her. The cave was just covered in ice, nothing else. It was even colder down here. Icicles dangled from the roof of the cave, threatening to fall on me as I slid down into the cave. Soon enough my feet touched the ground as Elia and I landed on a small cliff that overlooked the whole cave. It was beautiful. There were thriving plants. Flowers of different colors were scattered around the cave and trees of all kinds were also all around us. In the middle of this giant cave was a floating island that was being supported by multiple vines. On it was a giant cherry tree with little crystals hanging from the branches.

"How do you expect us to get over there?" I asked Elian sarcastically. She looked around for a bit before grabbing a stick. She swung the stick over one of the vines and grabbed the other side. Elian started running until jumping off the edge, still holding onto the stick. I grabbed a stick of my own and did the same thing she did. I was so close to the island, but the vine started giving in. I looked back to see Riverian cutting the vine with a small knife.

"Elian we have a problem!" I yelled at her. She looked back and saw Riverian. As we watched Riverian, Silver Paws and Elian's familiar came sliding down the ice. Once they saw Riverian, they ran up to him. Silver Paws started clawing him as Elian's deer pushing him away with its head. Finally, we made it to the island. We ran up to the cherry tree to find a hole in it. The hole had a rainbow crystal floating in the middle of it.

"It's okay, but Elian, why did we come here. How would you know if it was okay or not?" I asked Elian. She walked up to the crystal, grabbing it, pulling it out of the tree. The crystals that were hanging from the tree started turning black as the tree soon started dying along with the rest of the tree.

"I didn't care whether the crystal was okay or not Robin. I only cared about it being there." Elian said blankly. She took the crystal and threw it onto the ground. The impact caused it to shatter into a million pieces.

"Now for you Robin. You have two options come with me, or the other option which you won't like." She told me, still sounding emotionless. I looked over at Riverian who was making his way over. Elian's deer went over to the vine and snapped it, causing Riverian to fall along with it. Luckily, he grabbed the edge of the island. Silver Paws ran over to the deer trying to stop it, but the deer grabbed Silver Paws by the neck and threw him over the edge into the water below.

"No!" I yelled watching him fall. Riverian managed to make it onto the island and started running over to us, but suddenly he stopped moving. Something was holding him back.

"Robin, you have to come with me. I'm saving your life! I'm saving you from them! The camp! They don't help you learn how to use your powers! They train you to become an army!" Elian yelled to me. I didn't want to believe her. Riverian was desperately trying to talk or reach us, but he couldn't do either. All he could do was stand there and watch.

"This is crazy Elian! You're crazy! I'm not going with you! You're a traitor!" I yelled at her.

"You're mistaken to think of me as a traitor. With you being on their side, I have no other choice." Elian sighed and I was pushed over the edge into the freezing cold water below. Everything became blurry, then black.