Hiding my bag in a hole in the roots, I walk slowly around the tree, searching for something new. The tree that I have called my own is an oak tree. You can see the top of the roots all around the trunk, which is also twisted with small trees. I love this tree because you can always find a nice place to sit on the roots, and you can climb as high as is necessary. This tree has been with me as I have grown up, and this tree will always be in my mind. I have drawn it from every angle that I can imagine, watched it slowly change during the seasons, and seen vines and flowers grow around it.

I almost gave up after going around four times, so I changed it up, walking in a bigger circle. Earlier I had taken off my shoes, like I do every time. I feel more at peace without my shoes on. The grass is still a little wet and tickles my feet. Then I feel something hard underneath my foot. Not sharp, but not too smooth either. Bending over, I see a necklace through my hair. Its thin, the charm, and is shaped like a sparrow in flight. Dirt and grime cover it, so I decide to take it home with me to see what it really is.

My sketch book reminds me why I’m here, so I pick it up and go sit by the tree. Putting the necklace on some roots, I get ready to sketch it, even if it’s dirty. It’s a simple necklace, but is special to me already. Soon the sketch is done, and I get ready to run back home. Wanting to not forget it, I put the necklace in my pocket to remember later. Then I am running through the trees again. It feels good to run, to be free from my troubles. Thump, thump, thump, the soft sounds of my feet hitting the ground and my breathing are all I can hear. The house appears too quickly, my freedom short lived.

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I slip through the door, through the hall to the kitchen. There is a plate of cookies out, so I grab one on my way out. My sisters and their friends have moved to their rooms, since they’re not in the big room. Once I get to my room, I drop my stuff on the bed and go to the bathroom to clean up the necklace. The bird is silver and a little worn, the chain is a copper color, also worn. It’s beautiful, and I’m in love with it already, so I put it on. I wonder why I haven’t seen it before, I’ve been through those trees so many times.

The rest of the day goes by, and before I know it, I’m in my pajamas ready for bed. As I put a few things away, I hear the soft voice of my brother. *I’ve learned almost nothing, Faye will be disappointed. She probably thinks that she’s going crazy; I wonder what’s really happening.* The door opens and Shon walks in.

“You’ve learned nothing, I know. I’ve had the same luck,” I say before he even opens his mouth. His jaw drops, and I laugh, falling onto my bed.

“Okay, mind reader, just give me no reason to be in here anymore,” he says with a smile. “Well, I think the best thing now is to test it out at school. Test it on your friends first, and then move to others. See what happens.”

“I’ll try some stuff out tomorrow,” I reply, thinking of how and what to try. Then this crazy idea comes into my mind. Maybe I can make people do things. Shon is still standing up, and I send a thought to him. *Can you hear me?* He stares at me for second then replies, *yes.* I smile, and then tell his brain to do the chicken dance. Suddenly, he starts doing the chicken dance and I just crack up. Slowly he realizes what he’s doing and stops. Still, I’m laughing and hitting the bed because it’s so funny. I can’t believe it worked.

“What did you do?” the look on his face is priceless.

“I just ordered your brain to do the chicken dance and you did it,” I say through laughs. He looks upset for a minute, but then joins in laughing. I go to bed that night thinking of all the things I could do with my new ‘power’.

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A couple of weeks past, and I’ve gotten used to my mind powers. I’ve used them on my friends and read others minds. I usually just ignore all the voices, but I pay attention to some of the every once in a while. No one knows except me and my brother.

Today was a Friday, but it wasn’t starting out like a normal Friday. Last night, when I was taking the garbage out, a helicopter was circling the area around me. Not just me, but it seemed like the whole school too. It creped me out, and I was still trying to figure it out. But that’s not all that was different, when I got to school, all the teachers that I saw looked really nervous. All of them looked a little on edge. I tried to read their minds, but nothing came to me, like it had been blocked.

“Faye, come on, we’re going to be late,” Kate called from her locker.

“Yeah, we don’t want you to be embarrassed when you’re staring at nothing,” Chris joked. “What are you looking at anyway?”

“Oh, nothing,” I replied. They still don’t know of my power, yet. I decided yesterday that I would tell them today during lunch. So I followed them down the hall. When we reached the end, we separated to go to our classes.

When I arrived to the history classroom, my teacher was no were to be seen. That was way out of the norm. Everyday he’s in the class room before most of the class gets into the room. I went to sit in my seat, which is over by the window in the back. The late bell rang, still no teacher. The soft mumbling slowly turns to conversations. I listen to all the thoughts running through the class, like *where is he? What’s happening?* I can feel the tension, and I’m getting nervous along with everyone else.

Fifteen more minutes passed, and still no sign of the teacher. Everyone goes silent as Ryan, a curious student, stands up and goes to the closed door. No one speaks as he slowly turns the doorknob. Everyone holds their breath as he opens the door, and all I can hear is my heartbeat.

At first, there’s nothing to hear. Then we all hear the screams and the banging. Ryan quickly looks into the hallway, and then rushes in and slams the door. Fear is written on his face. I can hear the unspoken question in my head.

“There are a bunch of soldiers out there, shooting everyone. I don’t think they’re dead. The soldiers are moving fast, and they’re coming this way,” Ryan says in a scared whisper. Bang! Everyone jumps as we hear the next door hit the wall. Panic and fear runs through the class. Then, like a sea, we all move together towards the door. I push ahead, and rush out the door with the first of the crowd. I look right, doors open and bodies on the ground, and run the other way.

*We’ve got to get this done fast or those special ones will figure it out and escape. Darn! I can already hear the kids running from the next room.*

A chill runs through my body as I hear those few sentences, and I run even faster, knowing they’re looking for me. Thump, thump, thump. I turn around and see my classmates falling to the ground around me. Pushing my legs to move faster than they have ever gone, I turn the corner. As I finish my turn, I hear the bullets rushing behind me into the wall. Holding back screams I see them fall to the ground. They’re not real bullets; they’re little tubes with a blue liquid in them, a needle at the end.

Trying to stay calm, I search for thoughts that might help me escape. But I don’t hear a word. Almost perfect silence, the screams have died away, so has the thumping. Slowing to a stop, I lean against the lockers catching my breath. I’ve run far enough down this hall that it ends in 10 feet. Slowly, I walk to the end, all my hair on end. The portraits on the wall stare at me as I look around the corner on my right. Suddenly I hear footsteps and I turn around. But I didn’t have time to move before I was pinned against the wall.

“You’re not escaping, pretty,” the man says as I try to escape. “Stop moving, it will be faster that way.” But I don’t stop, even though I can barely move anyways. The man who has me pinned is huge, like buff huge, and at least 6.3. He pulls out a walky-talky and says, “I’ve got the last one by the office, I need a gun, mines out of ammo.” Then a gruff voice called back, “Great, a few troops will be there in just a minute. Great job, soldier.”

I stop struggling for a moment to hear the faint sound of soldiers coming down the hall. *No! This can’t happen; I’ve got to get away. Now.* That’s all I can think as I start struggling again.

“You just can’t stay still can you,” the man says I almost slip out of his grip. I slide down the wall, trying something different. He tries to catch me, but just slams his hand hard into my face. My face stings as he pulls me from the ground, just as the other soldiers come around the corner. They could tell by the way he was holding me and the huge bruise on my face that I had fought.

“Give us a good shot at her arm or something,” the skinniest one says. The man who holds me moves to the side, and another soldier shoots, and everything goes black.