

The Strange Disappearance

By Mackenzie Young

As the sparkly, dense snow was falling, Caroline was walking gingerly home from school. When she walked by the grand old tree, she had a cold shiver flow throughout her body. Caroline paused for a second, then she continued walking. She had a strange vision about her best friend, Paige.

Once Caroline got home, she shot a text to Paige immediately...No response. *She probably doesn't have her phone with her, Caroline thought.* When Caroline woke up the next day, she sent another text...No response. She was starting to get scared. *I can just talk to her at school, Caroline thought.* But when she arrived at school, Paige wasn't there! It was like Paige just disappeared off the face of the planet. Caroline was worried all day about Paige, but she managed to get through the merciless day. After school, Caroline went to Paige's house to see if her parents had any idea what was going on. Paige's parents had no clue what Caroline was talking about. They were no help.

As Caroline was walking home from school, she passed the grand old tree. She had a strange shiver slip through her body again. This time, she had a vision of her older brother, Liam. As Caroline was walking, she had a nonstop headache. It was as if her headaches and visions were supposed to be a clue.

Caroline sprinted home. She ripped through the door right to her parents. She asked "Where's Liam?"

Her parents responded with, "I don't know he's probably playing video games in his room."

Caroline raced upstairs to her brother's room, no Liam. She ran to the backyard, no Liam. She was starting to wonder why her parents and Paige's parents weren't concerned at all. Caroline was restless all night; she just couldn't fall asleep. Finally, she decided to take a short stroll outside. She grabbed her coat and dashed out the door. She decided to pass by the grand old tree. She felt the peculiar shiver again, then the vision. Caroline started to realize a pattern. Every time she passed the tree she had those two strange reactions. Caroline walked very slowly up to the tree. She started to notice little stars etched into the tree. She rubbed her hand on it, and suddenly, the tree started to open up. It formed sort of a walkway into the tree. It was shining with golden light. Caroline was entranced by it, and walked inside. She was stunned to find Liam and Paige. She was so relieved. But once Caroline walked in, the tree immediately closed. Caroline knew it was up to her to decide how to get her, her brother, and her best friend out.

Suddenly, a voice boomed, it said "If you wish to leave you must leave an offering." Caroline realized that the voice was giving her a headache every time she walked by the tree. Caroline remembered the stars etched into the tree. She realized her necklace had the exact design. She ripped off her necklace and threw it at the inside of the trunk. The necklace was accepted. The tree trunk slowly opened, and everyone ran home. When Liam and Caroline got home, she immediately called Paige to make sure she got home okay. She did.