

The Caravan

“Now Abdul, don’t go playing up by the pylon,” my Dad had warned me often enough. “It’s dangerous. You’ll get yourself electrocuted.” Did I listen? Of course I didn’t. Most days after school that was exactly where I went. The pylon he was talking about stood at the end of Muggie Moss Road. Red and brown rust fluttered from its lean body and it made odd creaking sounds when the wind blew. It was there we found the empty caravan, damp inside, moss clinging to its wheels and windows smeared with green grime. It was a place of dead spiders and dust but it was our special place.

That afternoon, a storm raged. It had been brewing all morning. The trees were like angry animals thrashing wildly. Rain lashed down, drumming on the metal roof. Inside the caravan, it felt safe. Izzie had found a candle and in the semi-gloom, its flame flickered with a cheerful glow. Outside, dusk shadowed the bushes. Then when we heard it: a clap of thunder so close that it sounded like an explosion. Izzie wiped the condensation from the window and we peered out. At that very moment, there was another tremendous crack, and lightning struck the pylon. Sparks flew, the pylon shuddered and, as if in slow motion, it crashed down towards the caravan roof.

Instinctively, we both ducked down fast. Hazardously, the caravan roof crumpled. The air prickled with electricity and rain lashed through the opening in the roof. For a moment, I was certain that this would be the end. In the half-light, I could see Izzie’s face. Her eyes were wide with fright and she gulped like a fish. “Come on,” she hissed. We slithered like snakes across the floor with the rusted pylon creaking dangerously above us.

Luckily, the door had flown open when the pylon had struck. We slipped out onto the muddy ground and lay there with the thunder grumbling above us and the rain beating down. Then Izzie started to laugh. She curled up into a ball and laughed so much that I thought she was crying. I couldn’t help myself. The next thing I knew, I was laughing too. Inside, I felt relief. Then we ran, through the brambles and out onto Muggie Moss Road.

Of course, Dad was furious. He glared at me suspiciously. “So, a tree nearly hit you?” I nodded, avoiding his icy stare. “You could have been killed,” he said. Shamefaced, I nodded. He was right. He’d been right from the start.