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Mr. Pendanski filled the canteens.

The Warden got a pitchfork out of the back of the pickup. She poked it through X-Ray's dirt pile, to see if anything else might have been buried in there as well.

"After you drop off X-Ray, I want you to bring back three wheelbarrows," she said.

X-Ray got in the pickup. As the truck pulled away, he leaned out the wide window and waved.

"Zero," said the Warden. "I want you to take over X-Ray's hole." She seemed to know that Zero was the fastest digger.

"Armpit and Squid, you will keep digging where you have been," she said. "But you're each going to have a helper. Zigzag, you help Armpit. Magnet will help Squid. And Caveman, you'll work with Zero. We're going to dig the dirt twice. Zero will dig it out of the hole, and Caveman will carefully shovel it into a wheelbarrow. Zigzag will do the same for

Armpit, and the same with Magnet and Squid. We don't want to miss anything. If either of you find something, you'll both get the rest of the day off, and a double shower.

"When the wheelbarrows are full, you are to dump them away from this area. We don't want any dirt piles to get in the way."

The Warden remained at the site for the remainder of the day, along with Mr. Pendanski and Mr. Sir, who showed up after a while. Occasionally Mr. Sir would leave to take water to the other groups of campers, but otherwise he and the water truck stayed parked there. The Warden saw to it that nobody in Group D was ever thirsty.

Stanley did as he was told. He carefully looked through all the dirt dug up by Zero, as he shoveled it into a wheelbarrow, though he knew he wouldn't find anything.

It was easier than digging his own hole. When the wheelbarrow was full, he took it a good distance away before dumping it.

The Warden couldn't keep still. She kept walking around, looking over the boys' shoulders, and sticking her pitchfork through the dirt piles. "You're doing fine, just fine," she told Stanley.

After a while, she told the boys to switch places, so that Stanley, Zigzag, and Magnet dug in the holes, and Zero, Armpit, and Squid shoveled the excavated dirt into the wheelbarrows.

After lunch, Zero took over the digging again, and Stanley returned to the wheelbarrow. "There's no hurry," the Warden said several times. "The main thing is not to miss anything."

The boys dug until each hole was well over six feet deep and wide. Still, it was easier for two boys to dig a six-foot hole than it was for one boy to dig a five-foot hole.

"All right, that's enough for today," the Warden said. "I've waited this long, I can wait another day."

Mr. Sir drove her back to her cabin.

"I wonder how she knew all our names," Stanley said as he walked back to the compound.

"She watches us all the time," said Zigzag. "She's got hidden microphones and cameras all over the place. In the tents, the Wreck Room, the shower."

"The shower?" asked Stanley. He wondered if Zigzag was just being paranoid.

"The cameras are tiny," said Armpit. "No bigger than the toenail on your little toe."

Stanley had his doubts about that. He didn't think they could make cameras that small. Microphones, maybe.

He realized that was why X-Ray didn't want to talk to him about the gold tube at breakfast. X-Ray was afraid the Warden might have been listening.

One thing was certain: They weren't just digging to "build character." They were definitely looking for something.

And whatever they were looking for, they were looking in the wrong place.

Stanley gazed out across the lake, toward the spot where he had been digging yesterday when he found the gold tube. He dug the hole into his memory.

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As Stanley entered the Wreck Room, he could hear X-Ray's voice from all the way across the room.

"See what I'm saying," X-Ray said. "Am I right, or am I right?"

The other bodies in the room were little more than bags of flesh and bones, dumped across broken chairs and couches. X-Ray was full of life, laughing and waving his arms around as he talked. "Yo, Caveman, my man!" he called out.

Stanley made his way across the room.

"Hey, slide on over, Squid," said X-Ray. "Make room for the Caveman."

Stanley crashed on the couch.

He had looked for a hidden camera in the shower. He hadn't seen anything, and he hoped the Warden hadn't either.

"What's the matter?" asked X-Ray. "You guys tired or something?" He laughed.

"Hey, keep it down, will you," groaned Zigzag. "I'm trying to watch TV."

Stanley glanced uncertainly at Zigzag, who was staring very intently at the busted television screen.

The Warden greeted the boys at breakfast the next morning and went with them to the holes. Four dug in the holes, and three tended to the wheelbarrows. "Glad you're here, X-Ray," she said to him. "We need your sharp eyes."

Stanley spent more time pushing the wheelbarrow than digging, because he was such a slow digger. He carted away the excess dirt and dumped it into previously dug holes. He was careful not to dump any of it in the hole where the gold tube was actually found.

He could still see the tube in his mind. It seemed so familiar, but he just couldn't place it. He thought that it might have been the lid to a fancy gold pen. *K B* could have been the initials of a famous author. The only famous authors he could think of were Charles Dickens, William Shakespeare, and Mark Twain. Besides, it didn't really look like the top of a pen.

By lunchtime the Warden was beginning to lose her patience. She made them eat quickly, so they could get back to work. "If you can't get them to work any faster," she told Mr. Sir, "then you're going to have to climb down there and dig with them."

After that, everyone worked faster, especially when Mr. Sir was watching them. Stanley practically ran when he pushed his wheelbarrow. Mr. Sir reminded them that they weren't Girl Scouts.

They didn't quit digging until after every other group had finished.

Later, as Stanley sat sprawled across an understuffed chair, he tried to think of a way to tell the Warden where the tube was really found, without getting himself or X-Ray into trouble. It didn't seem possible. He even thought about sneaking out at night and digging in that hole by himself. But the last thing he wanted to do after digging all day was to dig at night, too. Besides, the shovels were locked up at night, presumably so they couldn't be used as weapons.

Mr. Pendanski entered the Wreck Room. "Stanley," he called as he made his way to him.

"His name's Caveman," said X-Ray.

"Stanley," said Mr. Pendanski.

"My name's Caveman," said Stanley.

"Well, I have a letter here for someone named Stanley Yelnats," said Mr. Pendanski. He turned over an envelope in his hands. "It doesn't say Caveman anywhere."

"Uh, thanks," Stanley said, taking it.

It was from his mother.

"Who's it from?" Squid asked. "Your *mother*?"

Stanley put it in the big pocket of his pants.

"Aren't you going to read it to us?" asked Armpit.

"Give him some space," said X-Ray. "If Caveman doesn't want to read it to us, he doesn't have to. It's probably from his girlfriend."

Stanley smiled.

He read it later, after the other boys had gone to dinner.

Dear Stanley,

It was wonderful to hear from you. Your letter made me feel like one of the other moms who can afford to send their kids to summer camp. I know it's not the same, but I am very proud of you for trying to make the best of a bad situation. Who knows? Maybe something good will come of this.

Your father thinks he is real close to a breakthrough on his sneaker project. I hope so. The landlord is threatening to evict us because of the odor.

I feel sorry for the little old lady who lived in a shoe. It must have smelled awful!

Love from both of us,

"What's so funny?" Zero asked.

It startled him. He thought Zero had gone to dinner with the others.

"Nothing. Just something my mom wrote."

"What'd she say?" Zero asked.

"Nothing."

"Oh, sorry," said Zero.

"Well, see my dad is trying to invent a way to recycle old sneakers. So the apartment kind of smells bad, because he's always cooking these old sneakers. So anyway, in the letter my mom said she felt sorry for that little old lady who lived in a shoe, you know, because it must have smelled bad in there."

Zero stared blankly at him.

"You know, the nursery rhyme?"

Zero said nothing.

"You've heard the nursery rhyme about the little old lady who lived in a shoe?"

"No."

Stanley was amazed.

"How does it go?" asked Zero.

"Didn't you ever watch *Sesame Street*?" Stanley asked.

Zero stared blankly.

Stanley headed on to dinner. He would have felt pretty silly reciting nursery rhymes at Camp Green Lake.