

# Cabin 12

By Helena Vadbunker

The crunchy autumn leaves fell from the trees and tangled in my silky blonde hair. It was a pitch black night lit by only the glint of a pale, foggy street lamp. The wind made the trees shake and leaves float to the ground. My best friend Chloe and I looked at each other fearfully as we walked down the muddy path. The stars were covered with a thick layer of dark grey clouds and the crunching of the trail under our feet echoed and broke the silence of the terrifying woods. We came for one thing and one thing only. We hadn't expected to see what we did that night. We were absolutely terrified. We weren't scared as in it made us jump but scared as in we weren't sure if we would even make it out alive.

It was 10:00 on a Friday night and my friend Chloe and I had been out for hours already. We were trying to get to my grandma's house but tiredness kept slowing us down. The trail was long and Chloe was struggling to keep up with me. "Come on Chloe!" I shouted.

"I'm trying Annie," she replied. "I'm exhausted".

"I know but we have to keep going if we want to make it to my grandma's house before midnight," I said in a groggy voice.

We kept walking but thirty minutes later we were not any closer to my grandma's house. We were still wandering the woods and the house was nowhere in sight. It was growing more difficult to stay awake with every second. My eyes struggled to stay open and Chloe was now at least six feet behind me. I decided that it would be best to find a place to stay for the night and go to my grandmother's house in the morning.

We were walking down the trail when I spotted an old abandoned cabin through the spaces in the trees. A tattered tarp was draped over the roof. Above the door the number 12 was printed in shiny gold letters. It was strange and didn't suit the rest of the dirty old building.

Pieces of wood were falling off of the side and mold covered the outer walls. It didn't look great but I assumed that it would be fine to stay there.

I carefully pushed open the uneven door. The rusty orange hinges squeaked as we stepped inside and the floorboards creaked beneath our feet. In the back of the room was a jukebox. It was playing music and an eerie sound that echoed off the damp walls. A deep voice whispered in our ears. The shadowy silhouette of a man appeared on the wall in front of Chloe and I. The figure began peeling itself away from the wall and came towards us. My heart started racing as we took a step towards the door. I felt a buzz and looked over at Chloe. "Run!" I yelled, grabbing her hand. The ghost chased us to the door but when we got to the exit it slammed the door shut before we could escape. The ghost looked straight at us like it was seeing into our souls. It touched our hands and sparks flew from its icy fingertips. I felt a slight jolt as the floor vibrated. I caught a glimpse of its red, marble-like eyes before Chloe and I both fell to the ground.

All I could see was that I was alone in a small room and saw a shimmering sticker on the floor. I picked it up and the room began to spin. The walls broke apart into colorful squares. They started coming together to form a complete picture but quickly froze and the squares started moving back apart. They turned into a room again and a person in a suit was standing in front of me. He looked futuristic and carried a briefcase full of pictures of the woods. There was also a picture of my grandma's house with a strange man in front of it. Suddenly things went black again and a gust of wind through the window woke me up.

I looked around for a moment in confusion. Mud splattered on my boots. The sunlight slipping through the dusty blinds showed footprints on the wood floor. The place felt familiar but

at the same time it was somewhere totally new. “Where are we?” I finally said. I saw Chloe laying on the floor in the corner of the room.

“I can’t remember Annie,” she said, still half asleep. I pulled her up off the ground and opened the door. When I saw the gold numbers the memory came back to me. It seemed as though everything was normal. Chloe and I walked down the path and there it was. We finally arrived at my grandmother’s house. I pushed on the door to go inside. It was locked. All the lights inside were turned off and the area was silent besides the cooing of an old bird and the whistling wind in the trees. There weren't any signs of people ever coming or going. It was almost like the house had been abandoned for years. I knocked on the stained door and a light began to flicker inside the doorway. A tall man opened the door and said, “Who are you and what do you want?” It was the man from the picture.

“Is my grandmother home?” I asked quietly. His aggressive voice scared us.

“I don't know what you're talking about,” he replied. “I’m the only one who has been here in a year”.

“That’s not true,” I said angrily. “My grandmother lives here. Where is she?”

“I’m sorry, as I told you she’s not here and she never was,” said the man. I sighed and walked down the porch steps. Since my grandma wasn’t here, I had to figure out where she had gone. Chloe and I set off again on the path but it was a little different. The ground was made up of rocks and the forest was well lit. There were houses in the distance that weren’t there before and there were new animals in the forest like rabbits and squirrels. Out of the corner of my eye I saw a big sign and pulled back the surrounding branches. It made my heart beat loudly like a drum and made my hands become clammy. The sign said Westbrook 2021. From what I know

it's only 2020. Chloe and I ran back to the man's house. He came back outside. "What do you want now?" he asked.

"It's June 2020 right?" I asked him.

"It's actually June 2021," he said.

"Oh no it can't be," I whispered under my breath.

Chloe and I ran back down the path and through the forest. We sprinted to the cabin we were at before. The numbers on the outside of the mossy cabin were not shiny. The 12 was a dull, rusty orange color. When we went into the cabin it was sparkly and gold. We walked in the cabin and looked for a clue for how to go back to 2020. Back to our families and friends. Back to the old life we used to have. The ghost figure appeared in front of us. He came and touched our fingers. The sparks flew from his fingertips and just like before Chloe and I fell asleep. The man with the suit was in my dream again with pictures of the dark woods that I remembered and a picture of my grandma.

When I woke up Chloe was standing over me. "We're back," she said with joy. I smiled and lifted up the blinds. We happily skipped outside and over to my grandmother's house. I knocked on the door and my grandma came outside. I gave her a hug. We finally made it back to see my grandma. We never really figured out for sure what happened on that mysterious night. All we knew for sure was that we were back and we would never go back to cabin 12 again.