

**A SURVIVAL MYSTERY NOVEL BY**

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# **WHERE TREES FALL**

**A FOREST DIFFERENT FROM OTHERS**



qanun nəşriyyatı



Where Trees Fall is a mysterious, haunting story which takes place in a dark magical forest. With devastating storms and wild animals running about, Alice and Emily must learn how to navigate their way out of the forest through hard work and mutual trust, and also using their wits to find the secrets hidden within the forest. As Alice and Emily progress through the forest, they learn the importance of honesty, loyalty, and friendship in order to escape this dark place. Where Trees Fall blends surrealism, mystery, and horror together to show us that a place like this never really lets go.

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# Chapter 1

## Alice, The Storm

*Saturday, June 11th, 2022*

I was sitting at my small, old desk, trying to get through piles of summer homework while enjoying new music blasting on my phone. I usually listened to my radio, but I loved the brand-new, expensive headphones my parents got me for my eleventh birthday. It was pouring rain outside, which was the perfect time to listen to my music and work on my schoolwork. I've always dreamed of writing and producing my own songs and albums one day. I look up to so many artists and performers in the music industry.

Cooking smells drifted into my room from downstairs, where my mom was making a stew for dinner. My mom stays at home with me, while my dad is a highly accomplished heart surgeon. Unfortunately, I barely saw him because he was always working hard trying to support us. My full name is Alice Lauren, but they call me Allie for short.

We moved to Aventura, Florida from California because my dad thought there would be better job opportunities for him here, and he also wanted to be closer to my grandma and his family. After we moved across state lines, my elementary school had to close for a little while, since we were near a severe hurricane zone. After the summer, I was supposed to start at a new middle school. Being an only child was tough; it meant I had to do all the chores, and there was no one to blame when I got in trouble—like the time I accidentally dropped my mom’s computer and it shattered into pieces.

It was hot and humid out, and the sky had turned a dark shade of gray as rain poured down my window, lashing at the glass. The sky echoed with thunder, like a rumbling growl, and the wind howled against the house, the palm trees shaking as it picked up. A cold chill whispered over my skin, sending a wrinkle of fear down my spine. Mist rose from the ground as an eerie fog settled over the earth. I could taste the heaviness in the air, like the calm before a terrible storm, causing a panicked beat in my heart. I could tell *something bad* was going to happen—and it would happen soon. My breath sped up, my palms damp with sweat. I was always worried when it rained. My family believed rain was a bad luck symbol. But it was usually fun to stay in bed, watch movies, or cry with the rain

as it hit my window. I had received a warning on my phone for a tropical storm earlier, but I hoped it wouldn't be too serious.

After an hour or so, my mom called me downstairs, and I could tell she was trying not to cry. I panicked. I turned down the loud music, feeling like something was off because my mom never gets emotional. She usually has such a poker face, no matter how hard things get.

“Alice! Grandma was just caught...” My mom tried to explain. She struggled to get the words out between sobs. “In a...terrible storm. The tropical storm turned into a hurricane.” She covered her face as tears fell. I saw my aunt's face on her phone and a saddened expression on her face. My grandma lived in Tallahassee, further north in Florida. If a hurricane had reached up there, there was a strong chance the storm was on its way to us next.

Tears started pricking down my red, puffy face. “A hurricane?” I said.

“Yes.” Mom nodded. “It swerved inland at the last moment and caused so much destruction. We're waiting to hear from Grandma, but we can't reach her yet.”

I couldn't catch my breath. Hurricanes weren't new to this southern part of Florida, but this one sounded so serious and severe. We had a sunny

weather forecast just a couple days prior, but this storm erupted out of nowhere. It seemed unnatural, like some kind of magic. *But how? What was really happening?* It was a nightmare. My hands were shaking, and my heart felt like it had skipped a beat. The skin of my palm became drenched in sweat, and I could see the horror in my mom's eyes when she told me about Grandma. Her name was Elizabeth—my grandma. Elizabeth. Was she dead or alive? Was she okay? My brain raced with thoughts I couldn't even comprehend.

I felt lucky to be safe and alive, but I couldn't shake the fear. "Are we going to be okay?" I asked my mom.

My mom quietly replied, "Let's just hope, sweetie."

"Is the storm coming here? Is that why it's raining so hard?" I asked with curiosity.

"Yes, Allie. The storm is on its way. What we do now is simple: be ready."

We fell into a heavy silence. My grandma was always the sweetest lady ever. She reminded me of the perfect grandma you see in old Hollywood movies. She was always very healthy and active, and she loved baking and cooking for us. Her cookies were delicious; her cakes were so yummy on my birthdays. Her food always seemed God-kissed and just