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The Misadventures of Ricky Ranger: The Snow-Covered Lake

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CHAPTER 5 – A QUIET DAY

Ricky stayed inside the next morning. The world outside was bright and white again, but he didn't feel the usual pull to run out the door. His legs were still tired, and every now and then he remembered the shock of the cold water and felt a little shiver run through him.

He sat at the kitchen table with a warm mug between his hands. Tommy was building a tower of cereal boxes. Charlotte was drawing a picture of a snowman with a crooked hat.

Mom glanced over. "Feeling alright today?"

Ricky nodded. "Yeah. Just... staying warm."

Mom smiled softly. "That's a good plan."



After breakfast, Ricky wandered to the living room window. The lake was far away, hidden behind the trees, but he still felt like he could see it in his

mind—the snow, the crack, the water rushing up around him. He took a slow breath and let it out.

He wasn't scared. Not exactly. Just thoughtful.

A soft crackle came from the walkie-talkie on the counter.

“Ricky, you up?” Max’s voice buzzed through.

Ricky picked it up. “Yeah, I’m here.”

“You coming out today?” Max asked.

Ricky looked out at the snow again. “Not today. Just taking it easy.”

There was a pause, then Eli’s voice chimed in. “That’s okay. We’re just hanging out. We can come over later if you want.”

Ricky smiled a little. “Maybe. I’ll let you know.”

He set the walkie-talkie down and curled up on the couch with a blanket. The fireplace crackled softly. Tommy climbed up beside him with his stuffed bear. Charlotte sat on the floor and started building a tiny snow fort out of cotton balls.

Ricky watched them for a moment.

Home felt good.

Warm.

Safe.

He pulled the blanket a little tighter and closed his eyes, listening to the quiet sounds of the house. Yesterday had been scary, but today was calm. And that was enough.

For now, a quiet day was exactly the adventure he needed.