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The Misadventures of Ricky Ranger: The Swarm

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CHAPTER 5 – The Evening After

The sun dipped low behind the trees, turning the sky a soft orange. Ricky sat on the back steps, watching the light fade through the branches. The woods looked peaceful again—no buzzing, no shouting, just the steady hum of crickets and the rustle of leaves in the breeze.

He rubbed one of the fading sting marks on his arm. It didn't hurt anymore, not really. It just reminded him how quickly an ordinary day could turn wild.

Tommy wandered out with two cups of lemonade. "Mom said you earned this," he said proudly, handing Ricky one.

Ricky smiled. "Thanks, buddy."

Charlotte poked her head out the door. "You gonna go back in the woods again?"



Ricky thought for a moment. "Yeah," he said softly. "But next time, I'll listen harder."

Charlotte nodded like that made perfect sense and went back inside.

Ricky took a sip of lemonade and looked toward the orange flag his dad had left near the stump. The flag fluttered gently in the wind, a tiny reminder of what he'd learned.

Adventure wasn't just about running fast or finding something new.

It was about paying attention—to the sounds, the signs, and the lessons hiding in plain sight.

He smiled to himself. Tomorrow would bring another day, another chance to explore.

But tonight, he was happy just to sit, listen, and let the woods rest.