

A Place We Can Call Home

By: Zain S.

Do you ever feel lost? Like you don't know what you are doing or what you are meant to do? It's like you have one purpose in this world, but you don't know what is. Well that's how I feel. My name Jonas Wells and my dad thinks I'm meant to be a fighter, but that's not what I want to be. You are probably thinking *oh Jonas why don't you just tell your father how you really feel?* Well, I tried that and it did not work out too well.

One morning I was fast asleep when my dad yelled, "Wake your lazy butt up and get ready, we have a big fight ahead of us and your opponent's dad is betting two thousand dollars to the winner!" I quickly got up and got ready. As my dad and I are in the car he tells me how I have to win or else...only thing I can say is "yes sir." We finally get to the B.F.G. I know just like the book, but here the B.F.G stands for something completely different: Boys Fighting Grounds. It's an illegal place where crazy dads take their sons to fight other people's sons for money and amusement. That's where I met my best friend Mark. We have been best bros ever since we were kids. Like me, he is also forced to come here and fight other kids, and like me he absolutely hates it. His dream is to become a famous singer, but he is trapped in this nightmare along with me.

I am now in the ring fighting the new kid and in one punch he is down. In my heart, I am just so glad it's over. But all of a sudden, the announcer yells "And the winner is Jonas Wells! All right folks join us next week for Jonas vs Mark!" All of the relief I felt has now been crushed into a ball and put into the bottom of my stomach. I could

feel myself getting sick. I look at my friend and he looks right back at me and our face read the same thing. It said, *I don't want to fight you.* Later that day we meet down at the river where we normally go fishing. We both sit for a minute in silence. "What are we going to do?" asked Mark. "I don't know", I say. "But I do know one thing, I am so tired of fighting, I just want to be left alone! Just you and me." And that was the moment Mark said the best idea ever. "I think we should run away."

My mind was spinning. That was the best idea ever! I don't know why I did not think of that before! Then we planned how we would escape. He said we can use the old boat we found a year ago on the side of the river. It was as big as a raft but it could hold two people. The amazing thing was it still worked! We decided to leave that night. I went home and grabbed all the supplies we needed. I got food, water, first aid and I even found an inflatable raft we could use just in case.

I met Mark down by the river that night and like he promised, he was there. I asked him if he was positive the boat was safe and he told me he had already taken it out on the water and it stayed afloat the whole time. We got our things together and started our journey towards freedom. We gave the biggest victory cheer ever when we were sailing off.

Suddenly, we heard the most ferocious sound- it was our stomachs! We realized we hadn't eaten all day. That night, Mark and I had the most peaceful dinner under the stars. No one yelling at us or telling us what to do. Just us, the stars, the water and the little food I had stashed in my bag. It wasn't much, but it was more than enough to make us feel happy and fulfilled.

Mark took the night shift and I went to bed under a moldy blanket I found. I actually slept pretty good until I felt the pitter

patter of rain drops fall on my face and the horrific sound of lightning. Mark yelled “Jonas get an ore so we can paddle to shore!” Immediately I grabbed the ore on the side of the boat and started paddling towards land. As much as we tried, we failed. A gigantic wave capsized the boat, destroying everything!

I must have gotten knocked out somehow and floated to shore, because when I woke up I found myself in a hospital bed next to Mark. I was told that a woman named Ann was walking by the river when she found us. She called 911 and they came to our rescue.

When we got better and were released from the hospital, Ann took us to her house. She was kind and we eventually ended up telling her about the B.F.G. She reported everything to the police and we later found out that our parents went to jail.

Since then we have been with Ann. She always encouraged us to be who we wanted to be. Mark ended up becoming a singer, and I finally figured out who I wanted to be. I wanted to be a writer. So, I wrote books, stories, and tales. I even wrote this story. Mark and I ended up living in the small town where Ann found us, because for the first time we both knew this is a place we can call home.