Down in the Crick

by TheMissingDays

Just a short story that I've been thinking about for awhile.
Hope you enjoy.

The Costume Box
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Chapter 1

Down in the Crick

Walter was not a smart man. Nor was he brave or honorable. He was spineless, cowardly, and would do whatever he had to save his skin. That is exactly why he was in this situation. He was driving down the highway out here in the middle of the desert. His destination, prison. It was a good thing his grandparents who had raised him since he was a baby were dead. They would probably be so ashamed to know that their grandson, the last of the family line had managed to mess up this bad. Or perhaps they had seen it coming.

Growing up Walter had not been a rebel, far from it. He had been a meek quiet kid who moved through life. His grandparents had provided a normal enough life for him. Yet to Walter it was never enough. He didn't want to be rich or famous, he just wanted enough. The problem was he never seemed to figure out what that meant. Money, friends, some sort of sense of purpose? Who knew, not him.

That desire though had been what had made him agree to do the stupidest thing in his life. Walter had been down on his luck. His grandparents had died shortly after he had graduated high school and for the next ten years he had drifted through life. Gone from one low paying job to another, a cycle of endless and repeating mediocrity. He could see his life being this until the day he died, that had made him scared. He would spend nights sat up in a crummy apartment thinking there had to be more to life than this. He

needed to break out. So maybe that's why he had agreed. It was a friend of a friend kind of acquaintance, although he couldn't really call anyone a friend, he didn't have those. The offer had been floated. The group was going to do a smash and grab on a jeweler store in the dead of night. In an out, nice and easy. Walter wouldn't even have do any smashing he just had to wait in the car on lookout and then drive off, it really would be nice and easy.

Walter had never been a risk taker or criminally inclined but he knew he needed to do something. So he had decided he would do this one bad thing and then never again. His cut would be enough, and only just enough to break out of the mold. Then he could live the rest of his life in blameless obscurity. It would be enough. The job had gone off without a hitch and the day after Walter had thought that he had done it. He had enough. That was until he found himself in handcuffs in an interrogation room. Apparently the universe had other plans. It was clear that Walter was left holding the bag as it were and the detectives made it clear. If he didn't do something he would be taking the full brunt. So Walter did what he had too. He sang loud and clear. Gave up everybody. They weren't his friends and he did not have any loyalty to them. One plea deal later, and a note of fully cooperating to the judge and Walter had been given what anyone would call just enough leniency. A two year sentence and two weeks time to get his affairs straightened out before he would have to surrender himself. Walter had never even thought of going on the run. He knew he would never make it. He would get caught.

No, Walter had decided to serve his time, take his punishment, be noble about something for once in his life. The caveat being that he was probably going to spend the rest of his life looking over his shoulder for fear of reprisal from someone with a grudge. The two weeks leading up today Walter had beaten himself up. Impending imprisonment had seemed to give him a sense of clarity about his life. He had decided that this was the point in his life where he had to turn things around, to stop falling into the same holes. He had two years now to figure out how to do that, how he could be the better person he wanted to be.

Walter went to grab for another cigarette only to find that his pack was empty. He sighed before seeing a sign announcing a gas station up ahead. He decided to stop. Get some cigs and maybe some food. It was the last time he'd be able to walk around a free man for awhile. Pulling into the dusty gravel parking lot of the gas station Walter regarded the building. It looked a little run down. It wasn't any national chain either. It looked more like some Mom and Pop general store. There were only two pumps. Walter turned off his car and checked himself in the mirror. He looked a mess. He of course hadn't been sleeping well. His gaunt face showed he hadn't been eating well either. Although he had never been particularity buff. He had always had a wiry frame. His short blond hair looked a little disheveled as well. He did what he could with his fingers before donning a pair of shades and walking into the store.

It was quaint inside. A cooler in the back and three racks of

food and other conveniences. The walls had some fliers for local events and some advertising signage for beer and bait. Walter saw a simple counter near the front. Behind it a man sat on a stool flipping through a magazine as a crackly radio played some jingle. The man looked up and gave Walter a nod before his eyes returned back to the magazine. Walter browsed the shelves and got himself a soda and some chips. He brought his purchase up to the counter.

“That all,” the man said.

“A pack of camels too,” Walter said. The man pulled his requested purchase down and set it down on the counter.

“You're not from around here are you?” the man said. Walter smiled a little. Small talk was pretty much a given in a place like this. Not that he minded. Its not like he was in a hurry.

“No, not really.” Walter replied.

“Yeah, I could tell. Not much of a touristy area either, on your way somewhere nice?” the man asked as he scanned Walter's items.

“The prison,” Walter said.

“Oh visiting someone?” the man said absentmindedly.

“Actually I'll be staying.” The man looked up looking a little caught off guard.

“Oh sorry,” he stammered. Walter laughed. It was funny to see the man get a little flustered. Walter thought that it was a rare occurrence for the man. He looked middle aged. Broad

shouldered and sporting bit of a gut, not overweight though. He had a nicely trimmed beard and some sandy brown hair that combed over.

“I'm sorry for prying,” the man said sounding apologetic.

“No problem,” Walter said. For a moment he paused as he locked eyes with the man. Walter was caught off guard by the piercing gaze the man possessed. “Don't worry I ain't a murderer or nothin.”

“Didn't think you was,” the man chuckled his tone taking on a more relaxed tone and letting a small twang slip in. “They usually don't let those folks drive themselves.”

“Yeah,” Walter laughed a little. “I'm just an idiot whose trying to do better.”

“That's a positive outlook, more than most in your situation I gander,” the man nodded.

“You know feels like I've been a rut most of my life, guess now is as good as any to make a change,” Walter ran a hand through his hair. He felt he was getting a little familiar with this man. It did feel good to talk with some one honestly for once. The man was certainly easy to talk to. Maybe Walter should have tried therapy instead of robbery.

“27.50,” the man then said. Walter took out his wallet. He cursed under his breath seeing he didn't have enough. He looked at the items on the counter seeing what he could take. It was between the food and the cigarettes, couldn't be both. He really wanted the cigs but figured since he was making

changes now was as good a time as any to quit.

“I guess just the drink and chips actually.” Walter said not able to mask his disappointment. Walter paid and the man who then pushed the cigarettes towards him.

“Take them on the house,” the man said. “I can see you're going through a rough time and well, I guess I want to give you a small token to say keep it up, you know on finding a better path.”

“Really? Thanks,” Walter said. He was in no position to act proud.

“Although if you don't mind helping me out, could I possibly bother you for a moment.”

“Uhh what did you have in mind?” Walter asked a little hesitantly.

“It won't take much time, its my boy Jake,” the man said. “He's back behind the store playing in the creek.” the man said as he turned around grabbing something from the counter before placing it on the counter. Walter saw that it was an old beat up time piece on a gold chain. “He was supposed to take this watch to keep an eye on the time, but he left without it. Think you could swing down there and give it to him?”

“You want me to give this to your son?” Walter asked raising and eyebrow.

“Yeah, I mean its just down the hill won't take anytime at all,”

the man said.

“You know I'm a criminal right?” Walter said. “Like I could just take that watch and sell it for money.”

“I suppose you could,” the man laughed with a booming vibrato. “There's a pawn shop about five miles down the road in town. I'll warn you though Chuck will try to give you ten for it, you should haggle for twenty.” Walter could only stare back with a look of bewilderment. “But I don't think you will do that,” the man said. “I think you were being pretty truthful about all that making a change stuff. So I guess I'll trust you.” Walter picked up the watch into his hand. It was nothing special. He looked up at the man. He didn't know whether to call him crazy or thank him for putting a modicum of trust in him.

“Sure I can do that,” Walter said. “I guess I owe you for the cigarettes anyways.”

The man gave a nod as Walter went for the door. “Thanks, like I said his name his Jake, you'll hear him before you see him. And I wish you luck in getting your life back on track.

Walter walked out to his car. He threw the bag of chips and his drink onto the passenger seat along with his wallet that was still in his hand. There wasn't any money left in it so he didn't need to worry about it getting stolen. He then looked at the watch again. It was old and scuffed up. He clicked the top open surprised to find it was still ticking. Then again he was just asked to give it to some kid so he shouldn't be surprised by that. He pocketed the watch and for a brief moment

considered taking it to the pawn shop as the man inside had said. He could probably put the money on commissary or something. Walter then sighed as he looked to the back of the gas station. He was trying to be better.

Walter walked to the side of the gas station finding a path that lead into some tall grass. Walter began to walk. He walked for a bit smacking bugs away from his face. The man had said the creek wasn't far but as Walter walked he couldn't see nor hear any water. The man had obviously downplayed how far of a walk it was, that or Walter had somehow gotten lost. Finally Walter could hear some splashing. He let out a sigh and picked up his pace. The sooner he was done with this the sooner he could light up one of the cigs in his pocket. He was jonesing for one something fierce. He could see a small ledge that lead out of the grass and he could see the creek through the opening. It would be nice to get out of this grass. As he stepped onto the ledge he didn't notice that there was an immediate drop and he also did'nt notice the root sticking up, that was until his foot caught onto it sending him falling forward and actually tumbling forward.

It felt like he rolled for a long time, though it was only two rolls, the other thing that caught his attention was how much it hurt, its like he could feel scratching all over his torso against the rough rocky ground. As Walter came to a stop he looked up at the blue sky filled with clouds and sun. Just then a face came into view looking down at him. It was a boy around six or seven years old. He had a smirk on his face that seemed to accentuate his angular cheeks. A smattering of

freckles was across his nose and a twinkle in his narrow eyes. Some sandy brown hair sat on top of his head with hints of blond streaks.

“Gee Wally you sure no how to make an entrance,” the boy laughed, his voice laced with a squeakish drawl. Walter sat up straight, still a little dazed. He looked at the boy who stood above him. He wasn't wearing a shirt or shoes and had on a pair of camo cargo shorts on. Walter blinked again as he noticed that the sun seemed hotter, that's when he noticed that he no longer had a shirt on. Had it ripped off? He looked around not seeing it anywhere. He then looked down taking a breath as he looked at his exposed torso. It was smooth and he now sported a pudgy tummy. He brought his hands to his chest slowly before he let out a little yelp. The hands were smaller as well. Everything was smaller.

“On your feet lets check you out,” the other boy said lifting Walter up from behind onto a pair of shaky legs. Walter stumbled forward a little before stopping. The jeans he had been wearing were now shorts and his shoes had morphed into a blue and white pair with velcro tabs, much different than the ratty high tops he had been wearing. What the heck was happening?

“Oh no Wally,” the other boy groaned. “Looks like you had an accident. What couldn't hold it?”

Walter looked back at the other boy with some confusion.

“I just tripped,” Walter said before coming to stop. His voice came out high pitched and whiny.

“You mean it happened when you tripped,” the other boy said nodding. Walter shook his head. That's when he noticed the large dark spot on the front of the shorts that started at the crotch and extended down both sides of his inner thighs. He touched the spot with shaky fingers. Had he pissed himself?

“I didn't,” he whispered.

“Alright, jus take a big breath, I don't wanna deal with any of your moanin.” the boy said. “What did you even come down here fer?”

Walter felt his pocket where the watch was. He didn't know what was happening but felt like he needed to get back on track.

“I was bringing this to Jake,” he said as sounding as if he was talking to himself. “The man at the counter gave it to me.”

“You mean Papa?” the boy who Walter presumed was indeed Jake said.

“Yeah,” Walter said before shaking his head. For a brief moment the image of the man at the counter had flashed in his head when Jake had said Papa. “No, I mean,” Walter stuttered before falling silent.

“Wonder why he sent you down here with that?” Jake said taking the watch out of Walter's hand.

“Thing don't even work no more.” Walter was left frazzled and confused. He turned back looking at the path he had come from. What the heck was he even supposed to do now?

“Welp, you heading back?” Jake asked. Walter's head snapped back forward.

“I can't go back,” he yelped. How could he go back looking like he did?

“I guess I understand that,” Jake snickered. “You know whats gonna happen now that you had an accident.

“I can't let people see me like this,” Walter groaned. Jake didn't seem to even hear Walter.

“You wet your pants, Papa takes your undies away for the day and you gotta wear the training pants,” Jake practically sang as if he thought it was funny. Walter's eyes went wide.

“I don't wear training pants,” he said stomping his foot. Why was he even arguing that point, even if it was true he had bigger issues at the present. Jake crossed his arms tilting his head to the side.

“Thats Mama and Papa's rule, they did tha same thing to me when I was your age. Sides it ain't that big a deal. You're four folks wont thing nuthing about it.”

Walter's eyes went wide. Is that what happened? Had he somehow changed back into a little kid.

“But I'm not a little kid,” Walter said looking at his hands.

“I know, I know,” Jake said patting Walter on the shoulder. “You a big boy. So I guess your big brother Jakey will have to help you.” Walter moved his shoulder back.

“Y-youre not my big brother,” Walter said. He didn't know who this kid really was. Or why he seemed to think they were related.

“What a thing to say!” Jake reacted somewhat haughtily before crossing his arms and turning away from Walter. “And here I was goin ta help you out and keep you out of the training pants,” he said looking at Walter sideways. Walter pursed his lips. Right now the wet spot on his shorts was perhaps the absolute least of his problems. Yet it was still a problem that needed to be dealt with and if Jake was willing to help then Walter figured it would be one less issue on the list.

“Okay, then help me,” Walter said.

“Why should I?” Jake said placing both hands behind his head as he looked off towards the distance.

“Just help me,” Walter pleaded. He couldn't believe that he was actually begging a six year old to help him, but these were desperate times.

“You're going to have to ask better than that,” Jake said with a wicked smile. “Say please help me big brother.” Walter took in a big breath. He still couldn't understand why Jake thought they were related but if Jake believing that he had some sort of connection to him got him to help then Walter would just have to play along.

“Please help me big brother, I really need you,” Walter said in his most syrupy and pitiful voice adding the last bit on top to

ensure that the other boy felt his ego all the more scratched. It seemed to work as Jake then turned around.

“You got it, big brother is going to make this all better,” Jake said flashing a toothy grin. “Lets see what would be the best way to do this?”

“Can't I just get a change of clothes?” Walter asked. The problem didn't exactly call for rocket science to solve.

“Papa probably has a change for you,” Jake said.

“He's not my –“ Walter began before holding his tongue.

“Besides we would have to go up to the store, can't let him see you like this,” Jake said looking at the water. “I've got a better idea, kick off your shoes and follow me.”

Walter got off his shoes and socks and followed Jake into the creek as they now stood facing one another. The water covered Walter's ankles and it was cold as he shivered a little. The water was crystal clear and Walter could see a ripply reflection of himself staring back. Except it wasn't him. His short blonde hair was now cut into a neat bowlish esque cut that seemed to scream little boy. His face had become rounder with rosy cheeks and a small button like nose.

“I guess I can take off the shorts too,” Walter said although he didn't exactly like that idea of stripping down to his underwear in front of this kid.

“What fer?” Jake puzzled.

“To wash them,” Walter said as if it was obvious.

“You can't wash clothes in the crick,” Jake laughed. “We ain't pioneers.”

“Then what are we doing?” Walter asked his voice rising a little not at all seeing why he had to come into the water.

“We'll just do this,” Jake said before he gave Walter a hard shove knocking him back onto his butt soaking his pants thoroughly.

“Wha, wahh,” Walter sputtered as he was shocked by the cold water. Jake then grabbed his wrist and got him back onto his feet.

“There,” Jake said looking proud. “Now no one will even know you had an accident.”

“I'm soaked,” Walter seethed.

“So?” Jake replied. “Whats the big deal? You ain't goin nowhere.”

“I have to go to...” Walter began before stopping.

“Go where?” Jake asked cocking his head a little. Walter shook his head. What, he had to go to prison? Like he could even show up like this. Not too mention even if he did would they believe that it was him? Walter's mouth then dropped. No one would ever believe him.

“Wally you okay,” Jake asked looking at the astonished look on Walter's small face.

“I got away with it,” Walter said softly as a smile curved his

lips up.

“Darn right you did,” Jake cheered. “No training pants for Wally today.”

Walter couldn't help but jump up and down in the water as Jake joined in completely unaware of what Walter was happy about. No one was looking for him, at least the four year old boy named Walter. Not the police, nor anyone with a grudge. Walter for once felt completely free. Sure this sudden regression was a problem. But he could figure what he was going to do about it later. He supposed at some point, he would need to figure out how he was going to get by. But for the moment those problems seemed far away.

He and Jake were soon running through the water enjoying the cool water against the hot summer heat. Walter seemed to forget that Jake was a stranger to him. He found the boy good company and some part of him felt happy whenever the boy would praise him. It had been awhile since anyone had given him any sort of genuine praise. The boys spent the afternoon doing all sorts of things. From throwing rocks and sticks in the water, to trying to build a dam which had been largely unsuccessful. At one point Walter had spotted a toad. He thought Jake might think it was cool and had went to try and grab it, but it had hopped away, which had displeased Walter. Jake had noticed and had then taught Walter the right way to catch a toad. Jake had demonstrated by slowly approaching crouched down before pouncing. Jake had then let Walter hold the toad.

“Eughh,” Walter yelped as he dropped the toad. “He peed on me!”

“Better wash your hands,” Jake laughed. “Else you gonna get warts.” Walter ran to the creek and dunked his hands in the water.

“BOYS LETS GO” they heard a shout ring out over the air.

“Looks like Papa's calling,” Jake said. The boys hurriedly got their shoes on and took off on the path. They came around the side of the gas station a minute later. Walter came to a stop as he looked at the path. It had seemed to take a lot longer the first time. Suddenly he remembered where he was. He looked around warily to see the day was approaching evening. Had he really spent all day down at the creek. Whats more he had totally forgotten about getting younger. Walter then saw his car still parked in the parking lot.

“Looks like you boy's had fun,” the man who ran the gas station said walking up to the pair. The boys were still wet and their shorts had mud splotches all over them. “Although I think I remember telling you not to go crawling around in the dirt.”

“Aww c'mon Papa, we helped you all morning in the store and Wally even took his nap when you asked him. Are you really goin to get all cross at us?” Jake said putting his hand on his hip. The man known as Papa merely chuckled.

“Guess not,” he said. “But you're going to have to change before we go home, or Mama will be mad at us.” The man

then grabbed Walter's hand as he was lead out to the pick up truck in the parking lot. Walter tried to pull his hand away but the man's grip was too strong.

“Okay Jake you change in the back,” Papa said opening up the back door as he grabbed a small red backpack. Jake climbed up into the truck before shutting the door. Papa knelt down going through the bag. “Wally lets make this fast so no passerby's see you in your birthday suit. Walter was stood in place. Part of him wanted to run but he couldn't seem to get his legs to move as if part of his body saw no reason to run from this man. Papa dug something out of the bag before holding it up.

“Guess we can tell Mama you didn't need this today huh,” the man said. In his hand was a pair of papery training pants with sail boats on it. Walter's face went red. He was about to say something to the effect that he didn't ever need training pants, that he was an adult, that he didn't have a mama. “I'm very proud of you.”

Walter looked at the man's smile as a pang of guilt hit him. He couldn't bear to lie to the man in front of him. His praise was undeserved.

“I wet myself today,” Walter suddenly blurted out. Papa's smile faded as he looked at Walter with a confused look. Yet Walter couldn't stop. “Jake pushed me down into the water so no one would know.”

“Wally you blabbermouth,” Jake hissed as his head hung out the window of the truck.

“Jakey is that true?” Papa asked, his voice turning somewhat stern.

“Yes sir,” Jake said. “But I was jus tryin to help him. He was gunna cry.”

Papa let out a sigh. “Its fine and all to try and help out your brother, but this is the type of thing you can't be doing.” Papa said as he stood up to look at his son in the truck. “You can't go around helping him cover up his accidents.” Papa then looked down at Walter. “If he wants to keep his undies he needs to try his hardest to keep his pants dry. Does everybody understand that?”

“Yes Papa,” Jake said. Papa then knelt back down taking the training pants out of the bag and setting them on top. “Sorry bud, an accident means trainers for the rest of the day.” he said as his hands went to the waistband of Walter's shorts. Walter had his head bowed with shame. He felt like crying. His pants were pulled down and Walter let out a small yip upon seeing that he was wearing a pair of white briefs with cowboys on bucking broncos dotted all over them. Once again Walter was snapped out of whatever weird daze he found himself in. Why was he letting this man undress him, and why in the world had he admitted to having an accident.

“What's this?” Papa then asked stopping whatever protest Walter was about to shout as he watched the man fish a pack of wet and crumpled cigarettes out of the pocket of the shorts. Papa looked at the package with a sort of weary shock before he looked up at Walter. “Where did you get these?”

Walter looked at the package in stunned silence. He had forgotten all about them.

“Y-Y-you gave them too me,” Walter sputtered. It was the truth after all and at the moment he couldn't offer any other explanation. The man didn't say anything as he plucked Walter off the ground. He walked to the door unlocking it before bringing Walter behind the counter.

“Stay put,” the man said with a grave tone that rooted Walter to his spot, not daring to move a muscle. The man counted the packs of cigarettes in the overhead holder before shaking his head. “Guess I know now why the till was short,” he said. He then turned to Walter. “I have no idea how you managed to get these, what were you even going to do with them?” Walter was about to say smoke 'em but stopped himself. “I'm very disappointed with you and I simply cannot excuse stealing.” the man said taking a seat on the stool before lifting Walter onto his lap. He moved him around before Walter found himself with his head hanging down as he was laid out across the man's lap.

“Wait what are you,” Walter screeched before he felt the underwear pulled down his legs and off his ankles. A smack then landed on his bare butt cheeks. Walter let out a yip and squirmed. Another smack came as Walter's head shot up before going back down. Another swat heard him let out a pitiful moan and before long he was crying his eyes out as snot bubbled out of his nose. All in all it was about ten swats but to Walter it felt like an eternity before it stopped. The man then lifted him up into a sitting position and hugged him

closely.

“Its over now, just let it out,” the man said gently as he rocked Walter slightly in his arms. Walter buried his crying face into the mans chest squeezing bunches of the man's shirt within his small hands. Walters backside stung and he could feel heat radiating off of it. But what he felt more was the shame. Somehow he felt like he had deserved it. His crimes were plain as day. He had wet himself and had tried to hide it, whats more he had completely sold out Jake. He also didn't exactly know how he had gotten the cigarettes but he knew they weren't something a little boy should have. He had been bad.

“Wally, take a deep breath for me,” Papa said as he rubbed Walter's back. The boy took a few shuddering deep breaths as his crying subsided.

“I'm sorry Papa,” Walter mewled.

“I know, your punishment is over now,” Papa said. “We can move on now, right?” Walter nodded his head. He didn't have to worry anymore, everything was set back proper and right.

“I love you very much. No more stealing now.” Papa said. Walter put his face back into his Papa's chest.

“Love you too,” Walter said. Papa then carried Walter back out to the truck. He got the training pants on him and a pair of red shorts and a blue tank top.

“You boys want to ride in the back?” Papa then asked. Both boys shouted yes as they ran to the back of the truck. Papa

lifted them both up into the bed of pickup before shutting the gate. He then went and locked up the store before getting into the truck. He looked over at the car still in the parking lot. He shook his head. If it was still here in the morning he would have to have it towed. Papa drove a little slower and kept a close eye on the boys in the back to make sure they didn't stand up.

Walter sat smiling as he felt the wind go through his hair. He felt so at ease in the back of the truck that he was a little sad when they pulled into the driveway. Getting out of the back of truck Walter looked at the small house with its lights on instantly recognizing it as home. He ran up the steps with Jake following. Coming into the kitchen he could smell something delicious on the air.

“Looks like my boys are home,” a somewhat plump woman with long brown hair said.

“Mamaaa,” Walter shrieked as he went and jumped into the woman's arms.

“Did you have fun today?” she said spinning him around as she gave him a kiss to the cheek.

“Yeah, I played in the crick with Jakey,” Walter relayed. His Mama smiled giving him a pat to his bottom before she pulled his waistband back. “Did you have an accident today?” she asked. Walter got a slightly sad look on his face.

“Yeah,” he said sticking out his bottom lip.

“That's alright,” Mama said giving him another kiss. “You

can try again tomorrow."

Dinner was then served. Walter watched as his Mom put some food onto his plate.

"I want more," he said.

"Eat what you got first," Mama said. "If you want more than you can have some." Walter didn't complain and instead dug in. After he finished what was on his plate he didn't ask for seconds his Mama had given him just enough. Which is all he needed in the end.

"Now since I heard you boys were playing the creek all day I think that means its time for a bath," Mama said lifting Walter up into her arms.

"Aww Mama we got plenty clean in the crick," Jake whined.

"Jaaake," Papa said. "Listen to your mother."

"Fine," Jake said with a frown as he got up from the table to follow Mama and Walter to the bathroom. He then stopped as he doubled back to his Dad.

"Here," he said, pulling the pocket watch out of his pocket and giving it to Papa. "Wally had it with him when he came down to the crick." Papa took the watch with an amused smile.

"Why did he have this?" Papa asked.

"Don't know, he just did," Jake said before walking off. Papa tossed the watch onto the table. He didn't really care for the

thing. Its not like it even worked. He didn't even know why he still had it. He had been given it by a strange customer one day. They had something strange about giving it to someone who looked like they were down on their luck. Papa hadn't put much stock in it. All sorts of strange people came by the store over the years. He figured he had held onto it long enough. Tomorrow he would take it to Chuck's at he pawn shop, maybe get ten bucks for it or something. Maybe use it as an excuse to take the family out for ice cream.