



THE CLOSET

# The Closet

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**CONTENTS**

CONTENTS ..... 4  
Dedication..... 5  
Introduction ..... 6  
Chapter 1 – A Hidden Tale ..... 7  
Chapter 2 – Carl’s Assignment..... 18  
Chapter 3 – A Journey into The Unknown ..... 25  
Chapter 4 – Bill Gantz ..... 32  
Chapter 5 – Into The Heart of The Mountain ..... 38  
Chapter 6 – Secrets at Millie’s Provisions ..... 42  
Chapter 7 – Uncharted Pathways..... 50  
Chapter 8 – The Triangle ..... 57  
Chapter 9 – The Cabin..... 63  
Chapter 10 – The Unwritten Name ..... 66  
Chapter 11 – The Closet ..... 72  
Chapter 12 – Elias..... 75

## **Dedication**

To every individual who finds themselves entangled in the unyielding grasp of memories, relentlessly pursued by the dark specters of PTSD and the terror of recurring nightmares: this dedication is for you.

Life, in its unpredictable and tumultuous nature, often throws challenges at us that are beyond the comprehension of those who haven't experienced them. The traumatic scars you bear, both seen and unseen, are a testament to your enduring strength and resilience, even on days when it feels like the shadows are winning.

Every story has its pages of darkness and light. Just as the night, no matter how long, eventually gives way to dawn, so too will the heavy veil of your haunting past eventually lift, allowing the warmth of healing rays to break through. This isn't a mere wish; it's an affirmation of the potential for transformation that exists within each one of us.

## THE CLOSET

### **Introduction**

Deep within the Adirondack Mountains, whispers speak of a cabin, hidden by nature and time. Here, it's said, the enigmatic Elias resides, offering respite to those tormented by their darkest nightmares. But every solace has its price.

When young journalist Carl stumbles upon tales of this mystical place, his curiosity leads him on a journey into the heart of the mountains. Inside the cabin, he discovers relics of a time long past and a peculiar closet that holds more than just secrets.

Drawn into a world where dreams and reality intertwine, Carl finds himself at a crossroads. Can he decipher the truth behind Elias and his mysterious cabin? And is he prepared for the consequences of digging too deep? Dive into a story of ancient legends, haunting memories, and the lengths one might go for a night's peaceful sleep.



## Chapter 1 – A Hidden Tale

In the soft embrace of nature's wilderness, the Adirondack Mountains sprawled out like an age-old beast, its spine ridging up from New York and stretching into the vast expanse of Canada. This rugged terrain, alive with whispering trees and chattering brooks, had seen countless eons pass, watching the seasons blend into one another in a dance as old as time.

The mountains, majestic and brooding, were a tapestry of colors. Verdant in the spring, they wore a cloak of fiery reds and ambers in the fall, turning into a still, white wonderland in winter. It was a realm untouched by the march of technology, where every peak and valley held tales as ancient as the wind that carved them. The Adirondacks weren't just a range; they were an entity, a living testament to nature's grandeur.

## THE CLOSET

Journeying through this vast wilderness was no casual stroll. The deeper one went, the more it felt like stepping back in time. Modern noises faded, replaced by the raw symphony of nature. To trek from the base to the remote recesses took days, if not weeks. The paths, while beaten down by persistent travelers over time, were treacherous. Sudden rain could turn trails into slippery chutes, and dense fog could disorient even the most seasoned hiker.

Yet, there was an area so secluded that only whispered legends spoke of it. Past towering pines and hidden valleys, beyond the craggy cliffs and murmuring streams, lay a makeshift campground. It wasn't created by a singular person or event but seemed to have evolved over years, perhaps decades. Each camper who braved the trek added something to it, a stone here, a cleared patch there, much like birds collaboratively building a nest. Over time, these small additions accumulated, resulting in a site that looked both deliberately planned and serendipitously chaotic.

Its structure had a triangular design. Tents and shelters rose in concentric circles, the outermost ones being newer and less permanent, while those towards the center seemed older, almost embedded into the very soil. The design was delicate, a fragile equilibrium between nature and man. Stones lined the pathways, gathered from the surrounding area, each one telling tales of past campers, of moments of respite, stories shared, and perhaps, of whispered legends passed down.

At the heart of the campground was a fire pit, surrounded by logs worn smoothly by countless travelers. It was the lifeblood of the camp, offering warmth against the mountain's cold embrace, a beacon for those seeking



refuge, and a gathering point for tales as ancient and ever-changing as the Adirondacks themselves.

However, despite its beauty and allure, there was an unspoken respect and trepidation about the place. It was as if the mountains themselves watched over it, protecting it from harm, yet also warning those who approached. The campground, for all its history and legends, remained an enigma, much like the tale of Elias and his cabin.

Elias had become, over the decades, less of a man and more of a myth—a specter whispered about in the corners of taverns and around flickering campfires throughout the Adirondacks. But before he became this phantasm, Elias was a tangible figure, a soul with dreams, passions, and a past that was as turbulent as the rivers that cascaded down the mountainsides.

His skin, now the shade of ash-tinted parchment, once bore the sun-kissed hue of a hard-working woodsman. Deep-set eyes that gleamed with a sapphire intensity sat beneath a once-bushy brow, now thinned with the weight of centuries. These eyes, full of enigmatic depths, held visions of seasons no man living could remember. They'd seen the trees grow from saplings to giants and then wither away, only to be replaced by new life. They were the kind of eyes that, when gazed upon, felt as if they pierced straight to one's very soul, exposing all secrets.

The tales of Elias that circulated were as varied as they were eerie. Some said he was a sentinel, appointed by ancient Native American spirits to guard some otherworldly secret. Others whispered that he was a lost traveler, who'd made a pact with the very mountains themselves, binding his spirit to the Adirondacks for eternity. And still, others claimed he was

## THE CLOSET

a shapeshifter, transforming into a shadowy wolf or a soaring eagle, becoming one with the beasts of the wilderness.

The most widely shared story, however, was one steeped in sorrow. Elias, they said, was once a family man with a heart full of love. But tragedy befell him when his entire family was murdered by a gang of marauders when they raided his land. Stricken by unimaginable grief and tormented by nightmares, he sought solace in the embrace of the mountains. It was here, in the depths of despair, that he encountered a Mohawk medicine man who shared with him the secret of the dreamcatcher—a tool to trap and isolate his most tormenting nightmares.

But as with all things supernatural, there was a price to pay. The dreamcatcher did capture Elias's nightmares, but in return, it bound him to the role of a keeper—a custodian of dark dreams. The medicine man, with chants and rituals older than the mountains themselves, anchored Elias's spirit to the land, decreeing that he would never find rest until he'd collected a vast reservoir of nightmares, enough to balance the scales of his own profound grief.

Now, this once proud woodsman lived on the periphery of reality. Cloaked in the garments of time—frayed, moth-eaten fabrics that bore patterns no living soul could recall—Elias became a wraithlike figure. At times, he was seen as a shadowy silhouette against the moonlit sky, at others, a fleeting reflection in the still waters of the lakes. And always, in the background, there would be that ancient cabin, the repository of his cursed collection.

Those who encountered Elias spoke of an air of melancholy that clung to him—a palpable aura of sadness and eternity. His voice, rarely heard, was a raspy whisper, like the rustling of dry autumn leaves. Yet, beneath that fragility, there was a thread of strength—a stubborn resilience that seemed to say he'd face many more centuries if that's what it took to fulfill his pact.

In villages close to the mountains, parents would often hush their children with tales of Elias, warning them to never venture too deep into the woods lest they stumble upon the keeper and his cabin. They'd speak of the chilling wind that accompanied him, of the eerie silence that surrounded the space he occupied—a stillness where even the chirping of crickets ceased.

But for all the tales of foreboding, there was also an undercurrent of reverence. For while Elias took away the pleasant dreams of unwitting tourists, he also absorbed the nightmares of those genuinely tormented. In doing so, he became a vessel of solace for the traumatized, an ethereal being who shouldered the burdens of countless souls, seeking to bring balance to a world teetering on the precipice of light and shadow.

As the years turned into decades, and decades into centuries, the line between man and myth blurred. Elias, with his haunted eyes and tragic past, had become the stuff of legends—a timeless enigma forever tethered to the Adirondack wilderness.

In the small town of Beaver Creek, right at the foothills of the vast Adirondack Mountains, a modest grocery store named "Millie's Provisions" acted as the primary pitstop for travelers and hikers alike. A wooden sign, hand-painted and slightly worn by weather, dangled above

## THE CLOSET

the entrance. Inside, shelves were stocked with a mix of everyday essentials and hiking provisions.

### **Millie's Provisions, in the soft glow of early morning sunlight.**

Jenny, a vivacious hiker with sun-kissed skin, browses the store's shelves before turning to Millie, the shop's owner, whose warmth is evident in her every gesture.

Jenny, gesturing vaguely northwards: "There are rumors of a cabin deep in the mountains – a sanctuary for some. Have you heard about it?"

Millie, her laughter soft, like wind chimes: "Ah, yeah that would be the legends of Elias and his enchanted abode. Darling, there's scarcely a soul that steps foot in here without mentioning it."

Jenny, her interest piqued: "Met anyone who's actually journeyed there and returned?"

Millie, pondering: "A handful, yes. They often speak of peaceful slumbers, a freedom from haunting dreams. But they never talk about the experience."

Jenny, leaning in: "And there are those who say otherwise?"

Millie, voice dropping to almost a whisper: "Some return with shadows in their gaze. They speak of dreams so real, they're tormented by them."

**The Rusty Lantern, its dim ambiance accentuated by the murmurs of its patrons.**

Thomas, a grizzled woodsman bearing the marks of time, holds court at a secluded table. Around him, an eager audience hangs on his every word.

With a far-off look, Thomas recounts: "The sun was setting. The tale of Elias had always been just that to me – stories. Until that evening."

Sarah, a local with raven-black hair streaked with silver, prompts: "What did you see?"

Thomas, lost in the memory: "A lone figure, dark against the dying light. The forest held its breath. No chirp, no breeze, not a leaf stirred."

James, a young woodsman with curiosity burning in his eyes: "Did you approach him?"

Thomas, a shiver running through him: "Our eyes locked. I felt a chill, deeper than any winter's bite. That night brought dreams... chilling in their clarity."

Robert, nursing his drink: "Strange, my cousin Pete brags of restful nights since his venture near the Triangle. Credits Elias with calming his restless mind but he won't speak of the encounter."

Thomas, grimly: "For every solace Elias gives, he extracts a heavy price."

**The village square, bustling with would-be adventurers.**

Lucas, imposing with his broad shoulders and hiking boots, speaks with authority: "Rumors will always exist. We can't stop because of some mere whispers."

## THE CLOSET

Emma, meticulously reviewing a map, interjects: "It's not just about Elias. The journey itself is very dangerous. The landscape itself holds challenges of its own. I've been hiking my entire life, and this won't be easy."

Ben, with a hearty chuckle: "If every boogey-man story were true, this village would be a haven for the sleep-deprived and tormented."

Lucas, resolute: "Our objective is clear. Find the cabin, get some pics, document the experience. If, and I mean "IF" Elias exists, well, I guess we will meet him."

Emma, caution evident in her tone: "If these stories hold even a grain of truth, some find serenity, while others are plunged into a living nightmare then this could be very dangerous."

Ben, a smirk playing on his lips: "I say we chance it. Here's to landing on the serene side of the tale."

Lucas, his gaze steady: "These mountains hold a lot of secrets. It's time we uncover one of them for ourselves."

The tales of Elias, the enigmatic figure tethered to the Adirondacks, continued to spread. Every person, every encounter, every whispered conversation added another layer to the legend. For some, he was salvation—a figure who absorbed their nightmares. For others, he was a harbinger of dread, leaving them with visions they could never escape. The mountains held their secrets closely, and only those brave enough to venture deep within might unravel the truth.

The village square, with its familiar bustle and hum, stood in contrast to the solitary figure of Nahinni. The elderly Native American, with deep-set eyes reflecting generations of wisdom, sat apart, occasionally sipping from a mug that emitted fragrant steam. His hand-carved bone necklace lay against his worn leather vest, signifying his tribe and lineage.

Ben's laughter cut through the ambient noise, "Stories, myths, and fairy tales! We're going for the thrill, not old hokey camping legends."

The resonant sound of Nahinni clearing his throat caused the trio to look his way. "In every whisper of the wind, in the rustle of leaves, our ancestors speak. Stories, they're the echoes of their voices."

Emma, recognizing the gravity in his voice, motioned toward an empty chair. "Please, sit. It sounds like you might know about the trip we're talking about."

Nahinni moved with the elegance of a seasoned dancer of tribal ceremonies. "Your trail leads to the 'Triangle', does it not?"

Lucas shared a glance with Emma before replying, "Yeah, the 'Triangle'. But what is it, really?"

The elder's eyes darkened, "It's where the spirits dance. Kanasgowa and Nyakuni, the twin sentinels, watch over Echota's Path, the trail where spirits have walked for ages. Some seeking its power find their way back, others remain, their songs becoming part of the mountains."

"But why?" Emma's voice trembled. "Why are so many drawn to it?"

## THE CLOSET

Nahinni exhaled deeply, "Within the 'Triangle', spirits of old offer healing. Pain, grief, sorrow, they're washed away. But" he paused, glancing skyward, "the spirits ask for balance. Every gift demands a price."

Scoffing, Ben retorted, "What price? Some token? A ritual? Should I go back to Millie's and buy a pair of moccasins or something?"

The intensity in Nahinni's gaze silenced him momentarily. "It's deeper than that. The land, the spirits, they demand balance. Elias, the soul in the cabin, he's become part of that balance."

Lucas considered his words, "Ben, quit teasing this is serious! So, you're warning us away?"

Nahinni traced a symbol on the table with his finger, "I speak of respect. The mountains, they remember. They've seen countless suns rise and set. If you seek their mysteries, tread carefully. Elias," he murmured, "is both a reminder and a guardian."

Pensively, Emma asked, "The dreams, the nightmares, they're the price for some, aren't they?"

Nodding, Nahinni replied, "The 'Triangle' amplifies the heart's whispers. Some find release, while others, their shadows grow."

Ben, ever defiant, interjected, "Ancient tales don't scare me!"

The old man met his challenge without flinching, "To dismiss the voices of our ancestors is to walk blindly. They've seen, they know. Honor them or face their anger."



Lucas, trying to defuse the situation, interceded, "Uhm, thank you, sir. We'll remember what you said."

Rising, Nahinni gestured to the mountains in the distance, "They've stood long before us and will continue long after. Let their stories guide you, not mislead you."

In the hush that followed, the distant call of a hawk seemed to emphasize his message: nature and its ancient spirits demand respect. When the trio turned to look at what Nahinni was pointing at and looked back, he was gone.

"Creepy dude! Let's hit it", Ben uttered.