

O Segredo de Hemel Toe



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Hemel Toe's Secret

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LAURA RUNS

I was breathless. I couldn't see clearly beyond myself. It was night, dark, and there was plenty fog around. Every tree I passed, I felt more fear.

The wind was icy and seemed like cutting my face. It was so strong I heard an intense whistle. The leaves were thrown one side to the other, until they fell to the ground, defeated, seeming to announce my end: the fall.

When it started raining again, instead of being happy feeling the drops hit me as if they washed me, I got into the deepest despair. I was no longer able to think clearly anymore. I didn't also know where to run, which direction to take, or even what was that place.

Which direction to take what is this place?

Suddenly, a shiver went through my body. It was as if someone, or something, had passed me by. I got cold and started shaking.

I did not want just to stop, to quit. But I began to realize I was getting exhausted and could not escape for much longer.

What to do, Laura, think, think, come on!

I've always been fast, agile... I always considered myself smart. But in that situation, it seemed like a huge emptiness had taken me over. All I could do was torture myself asking me why.

Why, Laura, why did you get yourself into this? Why didn't you see earlier it was all just a game, a trap? Now what? What are you gonna do?

Another question in my mind was how much time I still had to find a way out. Worse, find and make it work!

And I tried not to look back, but the harder I tried, the more inevitable it seemed. I had to look. It was as if this way I had a little bit control.

Laura, come on... Control of what? Your time is ending up!

The fact is I never lost hope to look back and see the day coming up, the sun rising up.

Oh, I would give anything to wake up and realize it was all just a nightmare.

Sweet illusion. Looking back was just another risk, more lost time, paradoxically, trying to get more time.

Once in a while I felt a strong blow hit my back, as if someone wanted to push me. That definitely made me look back. Only when I looked, all I saw was darkness, there was nothing and nobody there with me. It was scary.

But... Why don't they end it up and destroy me? Maybe I still got a shot.

I resumed courage. I kept thinking everything could just be a misunderstanding.

I just made justice.

That could not mean such a great punishment. Oh, yes, 'cause this could only be about punishment!

But I soon got back to the darkest thoughts...

They came to pick you up, Laura. You Will pay for your choices with your own life.

And so tormented, I kept running, dodging trees, feeling the wind cutting my face, and with the clear feeling I was gonna meet my end. Then I got breathless, I was helpless and had to stop.

I was on the edge of a precipice, what gave me two options. At least theoretically.

One was throw myself down. That was not really encouraging. The other one was to stay and wait for whatever was coming for me. That wasn't encouraging either.

None of these obvious options, that anyone in the same situation would see, had an encouraging end. I needed to be more creative.

It's weird. When you're facing a risk, under a lot of pressure, it seems like your mind and body work differently. A split second may seem an hour, so many things you can do and think.

First, you start valuing more little details, your everyday, and people around you. You see death coming and no longer care about big projects, failed or not.

The things that go through your mind in that split second...

I remembered the Day in which my mom gave me a doll dressed as a princess. She told me I would be like that when I grew up. I was about six years old.

Also when she left me grounded. I made a mess in the classroom and she was called to school because of that.

But what I started remembering most strongly was the day my dad passed away.

I was nine. At the final moments he was laying in his bed with closed eyes. He took my hand and asked me to take care of my mom. He said I should be strong.

As soon as I was alone with him in the bedroom, he turned his head towards me and looked me intently. I felt like he could reach the deepest part in me: my soul.

In a weird way, that seemed out of context for me, out of everything we talked about, he held me pretty firm, almost attacking me, and begged me not to hear thoughts of revenge. I was scared.

How come did I forget or ignore for so many years what he told me almost in despair? And why didn't I tell anyone about it?

"(...) Laura, do not get blinded by power and revenge. It's all a big illusion. You do not need to go through the storm to triumph. It's all a

*matter of choice. When you are requested, you shall be strengthened.
Do not be fooled... Resist!*

These were the exact last words I heard from my dad before he was gone.

I felt he was struggling not to leave, he had other revelations for me.

He wanted to warn me about something else! I know it!

But he hadn't anymore time. When he started to articulate the next words, sound simply didn't come out. He stopped talking, and it didn't take long his eyes were closed and he was gone.

His last image, his contorted face, full of pain, anguish, regrets, didn't come out of my mind for years. I've had lots of nightmares about it and what he had told me.

But our mind has incredible defenses mechanisms, and oblivion – even partial, only about details, or some words –, is perfect in some situations.

At least I thought so for years. Years in which I was happy not having nightmares about my dad's death and not thinking about the things he told me anymore. I just dealt with what I understood as the truth: my dad was very, very sick before he died and should be delirious in the final moments.

Anyway, at the time I didn't understand anything. For a while it was all bounding in my mind, senseless for me. It didn't take long and I buried everything deep down in my subconscious without hesitation.

But now I know exactly what he was talking about. More than that. I'm feeling exactly everything he tried to warn me and in those days didn't make any sense at all.

Back to risky situations, those moments of great tension.

Our senses are also heightened. At the slightest noise or movement our body reacts instinctively. That was crucial, because my reaction was to draw a pentagram, and within it, a circle around me, as I hadn't done for a long time.

I was protected, gained some time to reorganize my thoughts. I got back hope that things could have a less tragic ending for me again. I focused on that.

Until this moment in my life, I was sure I didn't need to protect myself from anything, that I was invincible. Within seconds it all changed. Now there I was, vulnerable, weak, full of doubts, having to appeal to what I learned at the beginning of everything.

I never imagined it would be like that. Well, I never stopped to think about the consequences before, to think that there would be consequences. I guess that's why some people talk about obsession. You are so taken by desire you cannot see anything else, only your own desire.

Alongside my obsession was also my inability, or rather, my lack of desire to really see me. And I, well, I did not want to realize I was keeping a hint of arrogance.

I always considered myself so smart it didn't even cross my mind things could get out of my control. It even crossed, but I chose to ignore this thought completely and keep my desire, my obsession, blinded by hatred.

Now I see it was also a little ingenuity. Messing with such powerful forces and think I would get out free, unpunished, that no one would interfere in my plans, which would end up linearly, as I planned them.

The universal forces are wiser. The balance ends up prevailing and putting things back in their place. Sometimes with no suffering, but sometimes with a lot of pain, storm and destruction.

If I could turn back time...

To be more precise, as my mom would say, and now I would also say that it is not to lose the last thread keeps me connected to myself, which reminds me I'm still me, that I still can be me: If I could turn back time in two years, seven months and eleven days...