

11/5/2021 Prompt: Deepest Dark, History of the Element 1 (Owen & Karina 11)

Doesn't get much darker than this, the boy thinks, seeing grey spots instead of cave walls.

But tonight's the night. Grandfather said so.

Fumbling, he pulls a matchbook from his pocket that – in the light – would read, Harrods of Knightsbridge, London. He'd nicked it from Charlie two nights ago.

"A service, 'tis what it is," he said to soothe his conscience. "Brother shouldn't have it."

Only three matches left. He snaps one off, scrapes the striker, and...

"Oh, bugger!"

Two left. His fingers quiver like fresh cod.

Steady...

Jagged stones glisten as the flame devours the wood. He shuffles down the passage, his soles scraping the rocky floor.

"I'm scuffling," he mutters. "Jenny'll like that one. Ow!"

Pitch dark.

One left.

Shake. Snap. Strike.

There.

It glitters, dancing, calling. His dirty fingers brush the spot. Nothing happens. His heart clamps.

"Liar."

Cold. Empty. Gone.

The space between the stars.

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"He went in there," Jenny says. "You know Alfie. Stubborn as Christmas."

Torch lit, Charlie pushes past his sister to get into the cave.

Why did Alfie believe Grandfather? Didn't he know the man was crazy? Didn't he understand what war did to the mind?

Charlie understands. He pushes back the tanks, the bombers, and the dead. His friends.

Focus on Alfie.

Deep in, Jenny grabs his hand. Even her spirit dims in this forgotten place. Charlie holds on tight – for her. Not him.

“His cap!” she yells. “Alfie! Alfie!”

No one answers. Farther in, he spies a blue stone the size of a sparrow’s egg.

“It can’t be.” But it must be.

It pulses, lit from within. He knows...

“Charlie, where is he?”

But she doesn’t have to.

They’ll keep looking, alright. For Jenny. For Mum and Dad. For the police. But not for Alfie.

Grandfather was right.

I went to write a history of the Element of Seren, and this came out. We’ll see where it leads at a later time.

TAG

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