

The Tunnel

She had been tracking the deer. Her parents had taught her how.

One hour before, finding the hoof prints in the soft earth, she had followed the trail of broken twigs and occasional nibbled leaf until she had located it. Creeping slowly and quietly, not making even the slightest sound, she remained undetected.

She had stumbled across the mysterious circles in a clearing in the forest, and watched as the deer approached them. With a slight twitch of its ears, the deer stepped indifferently through the first circle, and vanished. Completely vanished.

The girl let out a gasp, and walked towards the circles to investigate...

For every step she took, her heart beat loudly like an almighty drum. She held her breath, trying not to make a sound but her feet betrayed her as they snapped twigs and rustled leaves on the ground below. Before she could change her mind, she followed the deer through the unusual circles. At first, nothing happened. She looked around her at the picturesque woods, bewildered. Then suddenly, a blinding flash of bright light...followed by nothing but darkness and the sense that she was helplessly falling.

Down...down...down. It felt like she was falling through to the other side of the Earth! Then thump! She had landed on something soft and springy- almost like a mattress made of grass. As her eyes adjusted she saw that in fact she had landed in a poppy field; only, there was something unusual about this poppy field. The poppies were purple with black stems! As she slowly stood up and took in her surroundings, she could see that that wasn't the only thing that was odd. The 'grass' was actually bright orange making the field look like it was full of 'Cheetos'! Just over the field in the distance, she could see a path, but not any ordinary path. This one glittered and sparkled all of the colours in the rainbow. Wondering how this was possible, she headed down the path in the hope that it would lead her to some answers.

As she began her journey, she saw something in the distance. A dark figure, almost shimmering. She ran to catch up with it. As she shortened the distance between her and this mysterious figure, she began to

recognise it. Could it be? She sprinted the final stretch. Yes! There is was: the mysterious deer that she had followed here. As she stopped to catch her breath, the deer turned to face her with its intelligent eyes and said, "I am glad you have followed me. We have a job to do. The fate of this world depends on it."