

The  
**BEST DAY**  
**EVER!**



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## **Chapter 1**

My eyes pop open, and I jump out of my sleeping bag. The brown linoleum floor is cold when my feet hit. I grab my socks and quickly pull them on. The right sock has a hole in the heel. That doesn't bother me one bit.

I pull on my blue jeans and smile when I see that both knees have holes in them too. Oh well. I love these jeans!

After pulling on my camo shirt, I walk out to the living room. My dad and grandpa are sitting in the white rocking chairs. Each holds a cup of steaming-hot coffee in his right hand. They're looking out the windows that face the bird feeder and the magical lake full of fish at the bottom of the hill.

Dad and Grandpa are two of the greatest outdoorsmen I know. They love hunting and fishing so much. I do too—more than anything else!

“Good morning,” I say.

“Good morning, Luke,” Dad says.  
“You're up early, as usual.”

I ease into the rocking chair next to Dad.

“Grandpa and I were just talking about all the amazing days we've had up here, at

the cabin,” Dad says. “The picture board is full of those memories.” He points to the back wall, which is full of photos of our family and friends.

“Some of the best days ever,” Grandpa says as he carefully sips his coffee.

“Do you remember the day we caught fish for breakfast?” Dad asks Grandpa. “That same day, we shot a handful of grouse and a bunch of ducks, then ended it all by catching a ten-pound northern at Boney’s Lake.”

“How could I forget? It was one of the best days ever!” Grandpa says. “September and October are magical up here, in northern Minnesota. It’s the best time of the year to fish *and* hunt.”

He leans forward and looks over at me.

“Luke, I hope you and your sister know how lucky you are that your folks bring you up to the northwoods. I wish every kid could experience this.”

“I agree, Grandpa,” I say. “I love it up here! It’s one of my favorite places to be.”

After a second, a great idea comes to me. I turn to Dad with a huge grin.

“Hey, why don’t we try to make *this* day one of the best days ever? Let’s start by going down to the dock and catching breakfast for everyone!”

“I like the way you think,” Dad says. “Then after breakfast, you, Crystal, and I will head out on an adventure. We’ll see how many grouse and ducks we can find. And then we’ll end the day fishing at Boney’s



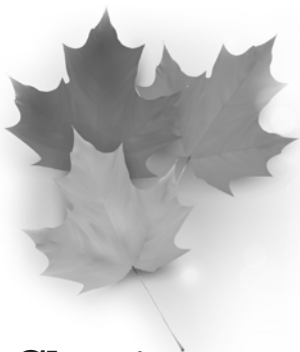
with Grandpa. Maybe you'll catch another ten-pound northern, Grandpa. Who knows!"

"Sounds like fun to me," Grandpa says with a smile. "Well, if you're going to make this the best day ever, you guys better get going!"

"Come on, Luke," Dad says. "Let's go catch some fish!"

With that, Dad and I jump up and head for the door.





## Chapter 2

The cool air hits me as I take a deep breath. The smell of pine fills the air. I love this smell.

Dad and I grab our fishing rods from the side of the cabin, then head down the big hill. When we get to the bottom, Dad lets me go ahead of him. I sneak up to the shore like a cat trying to catch a bird. I don't want to step on the dock yet and scare any fish away.

A light fog drifts over the lake, and I can hear blue jays calling in the woods. As

I gaze into the crystal-clear water, I see a nice largemouth bass swimming slowly by the end of the dock.

I shift into fishing mode. I unhook my white Mister Twister lure from the rod eyelet and send it flying. Then I slowly reel in and do some quick jigs as the lure approaches the dock.

Like a shark, the bass shoots out from under the shadows and grabs my lure.

As fast as a lightning strike, I jerk back and set the hook.

“Bam! I got it!” I shout as I ready myself for the fight.

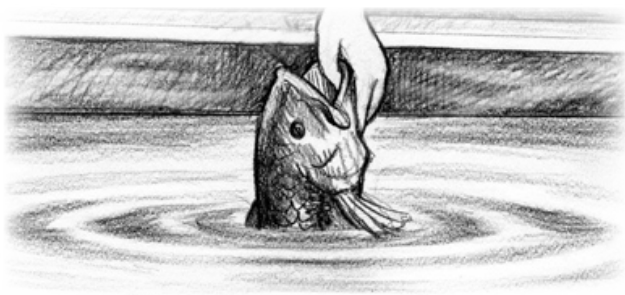
And man, does he fight! The bass races away, pulling line off my reel. Then he jumps two feet out of the water, like breaking

through glass. He hits with a smack, sending waves out in a circle.

“Good try, big guy,” I tell him. “But you aren’t getting away!”

I jump onto the dock and walk to the end, reeling and keeping the line tight. After a great fight, I finally pull the bass next to the dock.

I reach over and stick my thumb into his mouth, grabbing his big lower lip. I pick him up, give him a kiss, and hold him high for Dad to see.



“Nice one!” Dad says as he joins me on the dock. “That’s a good way to start the best day ever.” He takes out his phone and snaps a picture of me and the fish.

I slide the bass onto our yellow stringer line, tie it to the dock, then drop him back into the lake.

“One down,” I say. “Come on, Dad—let’s do this!”

I launch my jig as far as I can toward the weed bed to the right. It lands with a tiny little splash. I give it a count of three, then reel slowly. I jig my rod to give it some action.

On the second twitch, my line goes tight. As quick as a rattlesnake bite, I set the hook.