Hatchet

Gary Paulsen

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Now Brian sat, looking out the window with the roar thundering through his ears, and tried to catalog what had led up to his taking this flight.

The thinking started.

Always it started with a single word.

Divorce.

It was an ugly word, he thought. A tearing ugly word that meant fights and yelling, lawyers – God, the thought, how he hated lawyers who sat with the comfortable smiles and tried to explain to him in legal terms how all that he lived in was coming apart – and the breaking and shattering of all the solid things. His home, his life – all the solid things. Divorce. A breaking word, an ugly breaking word.

Divorce.

Secrets.

No, not secrets so much as just the Secret. What he knew and had not told anybody, what he knew about his mother that had caused the divorce, what he knew, what he knew – the Secret.