

## Into the Woods

One step at a time, Lara crept down the stairs. At the bottom, she paused but all that she could hear was blood thumping in her ears. If she was quick, she'd be back before her parents noticed.



Twenty minutes later, she entered Harrow Woods. Instantly, the sunlight disappeared and black, quivering leaves hung over her. Branches scratched her face and pulled at her hair. Under her feet, the ground was uneven because it was covered in mossy tree roots. Although the spring day was warm, she pulled her coat tighter around her.

Warily, she turned the corner in the deepest part of the woods. After a few moments, she heard the wind awaken in the woods. The water in the stream rippled, the trees rustled and a damp petal landed on her cheek. Lara shivered. Behind her, something creaked. What was that?

She whipped round but there was nothing. Lara ran. She was sure she could hear something cracking the dried twigs behind her as she sped through the woods. Terrified, she didn't stop until she reached the biggest oak tree, where she paused to catch her breath.

Suddenly, she heard a voice. She looked up to see a boy and girl a few metres behind her.

"Would you like to play with us?" cried a boy, about Lara's age.

"Oh, no thank you," replied Lara as she straightened up.

"Where are you going?" asked the girl, swinging on a tree branch.

"Nowhere," answered Lara, continuing along the path.

Lara shook her head. How silly of her for being scared! A few steps later and she was out of the woods. Carefully, she crossed the road, jangling the money in her pocket. Now, which sweets would she buy?

