Step 19 – "The air is getting thinner. Take your time. We're in no rush." SUSIE. HUNTER. ADVENTURE!

# PART.019 – The Astronaut, The Detective, and The Mission to Bring Dad Home 🜠

Where Hunter's imagination takes flight, Susie sees the world through his eyes, and Tanya challenges her to dream bigger.

Scene 1: The Grand Interrogation The moment Susie stepped into Grandma Lucy's house, she barely had time to take off her coat before— "Where. Have. You. Been."

Hunter stood in the center of the living room, arms crossed, eyes narrowed like a detective in a highstakes investigation.

Susie blinked. "... Excuse me?"

Hunter took a slow, dramatic step forward. "You vanished. Disappeared. Like a ghost."

Susie snorted. "Hunter, I was gone for two hours." Hunter tapped his chin, pacing like a detective piecing together a mystery.

"One hour and fifty-seven minutes, actually."

Susie held up her hands in surrender. "Alright, Officer Hunter. I was at Grandpa Ken's store."

Hunter narrowed his eyes further. "A likely story." He squinted. "And how do I know you weren't off making secret plans?"

Susie leaned in, lowering her voice like she was revealing classified information.

"I was."

Hunter froze.

"....What?"

Susie smirked. "Plans to bring Dad home."

For a moment, Hunter stood still, his detective act flickering into something else—hope. Real, unmistakable hope.

Then, he coughed, straightening his little shoulders. "...Okay, fine. You're off the hook."

He narrowed his eyes again. **"But just barely."** Susie **laughed**, ruffling his hair as she finally kicked off her boots. **"Tough crowd."** 

● Scene 2: Dinner with a Future Astronaut By the time they sat down for dinner, the smell of homemade pasta and roasted vegetables filled the air. Hunter twirled his fork in his spaghetti, then looked up. "Mom, I think I figured it out." Susie took a sip of tea. "Figured what out?"

Hunter straightened in his chair, suddenly very serious. "Why astronauts train so much before going to space."

Susie set down her cup, curious. "Okay, tell me."

Hunter pointed at her. "It's like what you and Tanya are doing with Grandpa Ken's store, right? You have to find all the problems first before you blast off. Otherwise, BOOM."

He made an explosion sound and threw his hands up. Susie grinned. "You know what? That's exactly it." Hunter beamed, chest puffed with pride. "Okay, then. Mission: Bring Dad Home. What's the next step?"

Scene 3: The Problems We Need to Solve Susie pulled out her goal book and opened to a fresh page. "Alright, astronaut. If we're going to make this happen, we need to identify all the problems first."

Hunter nodded firmly, then grabbed a pen.

"Step one: The Big Problem." He wrote in big, wobbly letters:

Dad only knows how to work with wood, but nobody here needs wood right now. Susie tapped her chin. "Good. What else?" Hunter scribbled again.

 $\bigcirc$  If Dad comes home, he won't have a job. If he stays in the big city, we won't have him.

Susie felt a little lump in her throat at that one.

Hunter, oblivious, kept writing.

We don't have enough money to start a new business.

If Dad stays, Mom will have to do everything by herself.

Hunter looked up. "Am I missing anything?"

Susie swallowed, then added a final note.

 $\bigcirc$  The baby is coming soon.

Hunter stared at that one for a second, tapping his pen against his lips. "Right... that's kinda important."

Susie chuckled. "Yeah. Just a little bit."

Hunter stared at the list. Then, with a frown, he drew a huge circle around all the problems and an arrow pointing to the middle.

Then he wrote, in big letters:

## "WHAT IF DAD MAKES A JOB THAT DOESN'T EXIST?"

Susie froze.

Hunter looked up, eyes sparkling. "Mom. Why do we need to find Dad a job? Why can't we just make one?"

#### Scene 4: The Big Question - What If The Job Doesn't Exist Yet?

The next day, Susie walked into Grandpa Ken's store, goal book in hand. Tanya was already waiting, flipping through a dog-eared paperback on problem-solving.

Susie set her notebook down with a thud. "Tanya. What if Paul's job doesn't exist?"

Tanya raised an eyebrow. "Then we create one."

Susie felt her heart beat faster.

"You mean that's possible?"

Tanya nodded. "People do it all the time. Small businesses, startups, new industries—every job existed for the first time at some point. So, what can Paul do that the town needs?" Susie bit her lip. "...Wood. He works with wood."

Tanya tilted her head. "And what does the town need?"

Susie thought about it. Snowy mountain town. Tourists. Grandpa Ken's store.

Her eyes widened. "**...Handmade wooden souvenirs?"** Tanya grinned. **"Not bad. What else?"** Susie scribbled furiously.

Furniture repair - old houses here need upkeep.
 Custom wooden toys - perfect for tourists.
 Carpentry workshops - 'Make Your Own Snow Mountain Souvenir' experience.

She looked up, breathless. "This could actually work." Tanya nodded. "It's a start."

#### Scene 5: A Night Full of Possibilities

That night, back home, Susie flipped through Hunter's sketches.

She traced his little drawings of problems. Then his big, bright idea.

### "What if Dad makes a job that doesn't exist?" She felt a tiny kick from the baby. Hunter stirred in his sleep, mumbling something about astronauts and rockets.

Susie smiled.

The plan wasn't perfect. The future wasn't certain. But one thing was clear—

They were thinking bigger.

And that?

That was the first step to changing everything.

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