



The Great Beast

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Action/adventure

Once upon a time, there was a sixteen-year-old teenager named Diego Escobar. Diego lives in a small house in Tena, Ecuador, with his parents and two brothers. Life has never been easy for young Diego. When he was ten-years-old, his mother was diagnosed with cancer. She died later that year and it broke Diego and his family. This inflicted serious harm on the family's financial state.

Ever since his mom's death, Diego's father, aside from his job of gardening, has been taking fruit from the nearby jungle and selling it to earn a little more profit to help the family. He always used to tell Diego, Eduardo, and Roberto to never ever go near the jungle.

"It is dangerous, boys. When I was just twelve-years-old, my father told me about, 'The Beast.'"

"The beast?" questioned Diego.

"Yes, it is one of the biggest animals known to man and it has created chaos among the people of Tena. Very few live to tell the tale of this great animal. Some say it is a leopard, other's state it is a bear. But how are we to believe it is either one of those. We have no idea and that is why none of you ever enter. Understood?" exclaimed their father.

"We understand," the boys reply with a look of nervousness.

The boys took their father for his word and promised to never go into the jungle.

Six months have passed by, and life still was not going Diego's way. The family is still struggling to get by from the expenses of the medical bills. Him and his family seem lost at what to do.

While Diego's father was out doing his normal routine sweep of fruit in the jungle, he heard this rustles not too far out in the distance. Diego's father continued to go deeper in to find more food. He reached this unusually

large open area in the jungle and walked out into middle curiously. More of this rustling was continuing and getting louder. It sounded like something was running in circles around him. He looked around in terror waving his machete around. Then it hit him, literally. Everything happened so quickly. So much adrenaline was pumping through his veins that his vision literally blacked out for a couple of seconds. Out of pure reaction, he started swinging his arm around with the machete and he felt that he landed a hit. He heard a loud roar and his vision came back. He felt like he was paralyzed and whatever got him, escaped.

Diego's dad gathered enough strength to get himself up and was able to look at his injuries. He was severely wounded on his back and right side. There were very large claw marks running all over the top of his body. It was a miracle that he was still alive. He picked up the machete and started trekking back towards home in Tena.

Meanwhile, the boys return to the house after their daily jog only to not find their dad. They knew something was wrong as he would always be home early to have enough time to clean the fruit out back. Eduardo suggested they head to the jungle, but the idea was immediately shut down.

"Are you guys stupid?" questioned Diego. "Do you not remember any of the talk dad had with us about the jungle. It is dangerous."

"Well, what are we supposed to do, just sit here and wait?" asked Eduardo.

Diego replied, "That is exactly what we should do."

The boys did exactly that and just waited at the nervously for their father. It seemed like forever waiting for their dad to return.

About two hours after the boys had their discussion, all mutually agreed to head towards the jungle. They walked there together and reached the entrance. They all took a deep breath, not knowing what they could be getting themselves into. They followed the path that was cleared by machete for around thirty minutes, until they found the huge, open area. They were just as surprised as their father, but even more startled to hear a loud, "HELP," crying out in the opposite direction. They all knew what was going on as they recognized this voice. The boys looked down and followed this trail of blood to this pile of palm fronds. Underneath, there was their father absolutely covered in blood. No words were spoken, The boys just picked him and headed back out of the jungle, luckily with no sighting of the beast.

They went to the nearby clinic, where Diego's dad was treated for nearly seven hours. Diego and his two brothers spent the night in their father's room. They woke up the next morning at seven A.M. to the nurse waking their dad up. They needed to do these tests to try and find out what kind of animal did this to him.

The results came back in the afternoon and the doctors and nurses gathered in Diego's father's room to reveal the news.

The doctor stated, "Mr. Escobar, after running some tests, we believe a...", before being interrupted by their father.

"I am sorry to have wasted your time, but I really would not like to know what did this to me," Mr. Escobar articulated.

A couple of days later, he was discharged, but would have to remain bedside for awhile until he felt he was ready to try return to normal daily activities. This inflicted even more emotional harm on the family. As much as Diego's dad wanted to get up and provide for his family, he couldn't. Their financial state was plummeting and doing so quickly. They were in dire need of help.

That night, The three boys were sleeping in the same room as their dad to make sure he stays well and in case he needs anything. While deep in his sleep, Diego experienced something only he can attest to. A bright white light came to him and brought this energy of pure happiness. This being didn't speak any words, but Diego felt that it was communicating with him via this energy. It told him, the thing you seek is in the jungle. Diego didn't really know how to interpret this, but he knew what the bright, white light told him, must be true.

He spoke with Eduardo and Roberto that afternoon about the night's occurrences. They didn't believe him and simply reminded of their dad's one rule: never go into the jungle. They told him to forget about it and only worry getting Mr. Escobar healthy again and somehow getting money to survive in a time where they are absolutely lost.

Four days pass by and Mr. Escobar is still bedside. Diego kept thinking to himself, "I can't take this anymore, I need to go into the jungle."

Diego then pulled Roberto aside to try to convince his brother to join him on his quest to find what the light had told him about.

"Listen, this has not left my mind. I know there is something in the jungle. Forget what dad said. Is it dangerous? Yes, but we can prepare for that. I can assure you, something good will come out of this," promises Diego.

Roberto responds, "Okay, but we can not tell dad or Eduardo because you know what will happen."

"That is completely fine," answers Diego. "We will head tomorrow morning at dawn. Be ready."

The next morning, with the sun barely above the horizon, Roberto keeps his word to go and the two head out to begin their quest. The two of them brought machetes and backpacks filled with supplies, including water.

Something is telling Diego to follow a certain path which, of course, he does. They follow this way for a while until they feel like they have gone in a circle. They stop to think and suddenly, they hear something running towards them in the distance. Their first thought was that it was the beast. Their first instinct was to run and that is what they did. They made it to a very big tree which they hid behind, while the rustling was getting closer and louder. A silverback came out of the bushes, but kept running. It almost seemed as if it was running away from something else, but Diego and Roberto could not hear anything.

They just started walking in a straight line from the large tree and came to the large, open area. They slowly walked out in the middle and Roberto asked, "What is that?" pointing at an item by the trunk of a tree. Diego walked over and discovered it was a shovel. He came back to the middle and looked up. The sun barely made its way through the canopy, but landed clearly on one spot. Diego started digging.

An hour went by of Diego digging and Roberto keeping an eye out for anything. Finally Diego hit something solid. He hit again only to realize what it actually was. It was a chest. Roberto helped to pull it out of the ground and they nailed the lock with the shovel. It came off with ease. They opened it and froze. They had just found a chest completely filled to the top with diamonds, gold, etc..

Then the rustling came back. But this time, it was louder than ever. They saw a head pop out of the bushes, followed by its whole body. This thing was bigger than anything they have ever seen before. This....this was the beast.

"Roberto, it is a Tiger," exclaimed Diego.

Roberto didn't respond as he was at a loss for words. The tiger charged and Roberto pushed Diego out of the way. The beast launched itself and got a hold of Roberto. It started going ham on him. Diego sprung up and impaled his machete into the head of the animal. It slowly descended to the ground. This beast didn't survive, and neither did Roberto.

Diego was crushed by this, but still picked up the chest and journeyed home. He got to the house and found his Dad and Eduardo chatting. They were very confused and worried to find Diego covered in blood, carrying a chest, but without Roberto. They both asked, "What happened?" Diego replied, "Roberto and I went into the jungle and found this chest, but he didn't make it. Everyone bursted out crying in shock.

Mr. Escobar picked himself up and walked over to the chest. He opened it and found all of the gold and hugged Diego the strongest he ever has.

That night Diego fell asleep peacefully and the bright, white light came back to him. Only this time, it did not stay in that form. This time his mother appeared and smiled at him. The End.