

The Many Questions in Saxon's Head

Once there was a curious boy named Saxon. He lived in a house out in the countryside with his parents, and behind his house there was a river.

"How old it is? The river has been there for hundreds of years, and taken many lives, I'll tell you that", his grandpa had said once. "It will be there still when you're twice my age, and it'll be just as young and strong as when I was a boy."

Saxon thought that sounded dumb.

Yesterday, there was foam floating by, and there's none now, so where is that river today? How could the same river have been there for hundreds of years, when the water's constantly changing? And where does it go?

These were only a few of the many questions that just seemed to fall from the sky like shooting stars and into Saxon's head, much to his family's dismay.

One day, when Saxon and his mother were washing up the dishes, one of the Questions fell upon him, seemingly out of the blue.

"Mum. Does the moon fly?"

"No, it doesn't have wings, does it?" His mother answered with a tired sigh. That meant she'd let him go out to play soon.

"So why doesn't it fall to the ground then?"

Mum sighed again. "I don't know, Saxon!" Almost there.

"If the moon crashed into the ground, do you think we could meet the moon people?"

"I don't know, Saxon! Stop asking me so many questions all the time! Here, give me that." She took the plate from his hands. "Go out and play." Saxon did not need telling twice and he ran out the back door. "Not too close to the river!" he heard her shout from behind him, but it was a windy day, so he decided he'd not heard the last part. He ran over the lawn and towards the river. He jumped down to the stones near the water, found a flat, nice rock, looked out towards the river, bent his arm, and... Stopped.

There was someone on the other side, just twelve feet away, sitting on the edge of the river under the forest that lined it for miles in both directions. It was a boy, some years older than Saxon, and the boy was looking at him. He was wearing strange clothes: Old-fashioned in style, but made of what seemed like woven grass and leaves.

"How did you get over there?" Saxon asked curiously.

The boy cupped his hand behind his ear. Saxon repeated his question with a louder voice, letting it travel across with the wind.

"How do you think?" The boy yelled back, similarly curious.

"Did you... swim over?"

"Do I look wet?" The boy gestured towards his strange clothes.

"No... Did you come from the forest?"

The boy held up his bare feet to let Saxon look.

"No..." Saxon said, pondering. "I've tried walking through the forest without boots, but the pinecones and needles hurt. Hm." He thought for a while, but no more ideas came to him. More questions had fallen into his head, though.

"What's your name?" He asked instead.

"Tell me yours first," the boy answered.

"My name's Saxon," Saxon said.

"What kind of a name is Saxon?" The boy asked. This took Saxon by surprise. It was a rare thing that someone asked *him* a question like that. The wind died down a bit, and Saxon found he didn't have to yell anymore.

"What kinds are there?" Saxon asked, a bit uncomfortable.

"Don't you know?" The boy stood up and started counting on his fingers. "There's all sorts of names where I come from. Like Vitlav, Brygga, Fors, Vass... Are you sure you're not named one of those?"

"I've never heard such names," Saxon said, exasperated. "Are they your friends?"

"Friends?" The boy looked confused. "Would you... Would you like to be my friend?" The boy asked, standing completely still.

"Yes, of course," Saxon said, and the boy's face lit up.

"This will *be so fun!* I'll show you my home! Come over to this side, Saxon, I have *so much* to show you!"

As Saxon started looking for the shortest way over the river, something buzzed far, far away.

"There's a boulder right there you can jump to! Come on!" The boy said.

Saxon saw the boulder and backed up a bit. The sound of wind and water alike was gone now.

All Saxon heard was the boy's cheering. "You can do it! Just jump! Come on!" The boy's face was in glee, watching intently, hurrying him along. Saxon got ready and took off in a sprint towards the river.

Three, two, ONE

As his feet left the ground, hands suddenly grabbed Saxon from behind and the howling wind came rushing back. So did the sound of the water... and the voice of his mother. She had caught him just in the jump, and she was yelling furiously. Between several angry questions and laments about him drowning, she hugged him tight, crying. Saxon looked back to the other side, ashamed, seeking a reaction from his new friend, but the boy was nowhere to be found. Many questions rained down upon him, as his eyes searched the forest line and the river for traces of the strange boy. His eyes fell upon something and fear settled in. Not only had *the boy* disappeared, but so had *the boulder*.