





Editorial Team

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Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza



WHISPER OF THE WATERFALLS

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PLOT SUMMARY

16-year-old Jeof de Guzman is a gamer who is also an introvert. In spite of an accident, his grandfather is unable to visit him. He is forced to go to his grandmother's remote mountain home instead. The words of the console grow faint, and taking care to put it away, Jeof walks into the nearby woods. There, he finds a waterfall both beautiful and gorgeous. He cannot help but recall his childhood memories of this spot. Here, discovering for himself the beauty of the waterfall, Jeof learns from his grandmother that it was once the scene of a tragic accident involving his father, resulting in an edict from the City Council closure. With these newly resurrected memories and the placid waterfall sending chills through him, Jeof promises to talk his father into saving it. through this journey, Jeof goes from being a shut-in teenager to one ready to accept his family's past and fight for his beliefs.

STORY:

Jeof yawned from boredom as he gazed through the window of the car, watching the city slowly fade behind them. The buildings were replaced by rolling hills, and soon, tall trees lined the winding road. His gaming console was tucked safely in his baggage, but for once, it didn't

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feel like it's enough. He misses the familiar sound of the city and the comfort of his room.

Being sent to his grandmother's house in the mountains felt like he was punished.

When he finally arrived, Jeof got out of the car and took a deep breath. The air was cool and fresh, filled with the scent of trees and dirt. He had forgotten how different it was up here—so quiet and still, like the time had slowed down and made him feel nostalgic.

"Welcome, Jeof iho! "His grandmother smiled warmly as she stood on the porch waiting for him.

"I'm so glad you're here. The mountains have missed you," she exclaimed.

Jeof forcefully smiled and nodded, but all he could think of was to get back to his games. After unpacking his luggage, he sat on the bed and turned on his console. The games that usually drew him in felt distant. It couldn't quite hold his attention.

Frustration had caught up. Jeof put his console aside and wandered outside the house. The sun was low in the sky, casting a golden ray of light over the trees that surrounded his grandmother's house.

Jeof hesitated to go deep in the trees, then he made up his mind and went deeper.

It has been years since the first time he had been here, but he remembered how much he used to love the woods.

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There were sounds of the wind that blew through the trees and the smell of fresh leaves and bird songs.

Jeof stepped lightly, and his footfalls hardly made any sound as he moved into the soft earth. As he went deeper into the forest, he heard the noise of splashing and rushing water, which attracted him. His curiosity got the better of him, and he followed the noise until he found himself in a sort of glade.

There was a waterfall before him, which fell into another cliff, and a clear water pool at the bottom. The water shone under the sunlight and threw a rainbow into the air. The view was amusing and admiring at the same time, when suddenly Jeof felt a weird sense of peace come through him. He had forgotten how mesmerizing this place was and how connected he had once felt to it.

He finally sat down at a mossy rock by the river's edge, letting the cool breeze from the waterfall brush against his face. Memories from his childhood began to emerge—the days exploring these woods, playing by the waterfall, and feeling like this was his own secret place. He hadn't realized how much he missed it until now.

While he sat down there, lost in thought, his grandmother appeared beside him. She smiled softly, and her eyes reflected the same peace that Jeof felt.

"I see you found our little hiding place," she said as she sat down next to him.

Jeof nodded. "I had forgotten about this place. It feels... special."

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His grandmother sighed, gazing at the water as it splashed over the rocks. "This place has always been special. You and I often go here, but after that incident, you stop going here. But there's something you should learn: let go of what's in the past and treasure what is in the present. Lived freely, my child.

She says as she fades.

"I'm sorry, Lola. I will make amends for you and treasure this place," Jeof exclaimed.

Jeof's grandmother had passed away to a heart attack, as had the former caretaker of the waterfalls. Because of the accident, the waterfalls will be shut off for the public. But Jeof had a feeling that stirred inside him—a connection to the land that he hadn't felt in years. He realized that this place, with its towering trees and sparkling waterfall, was more than just a place in the mountains. It was part of his precious memories with his grandmother. And he couldn't let it stay hidden any longer.

The next few days, Jeof spent every hour and minute he could by the waterfall. He cleaned up the area, clearing away the fallen branches and overgrown plants that had taken over.

However, Jeof was aware that additional action was required if he wanted to save the waterfall. He told his father about his experiences and the significance of the location in his conversation. His father was first hesitant, the memories of the accident still plaguing him. Jeof's enthusiasm was infectious, too, and gradually his father started to view the waterfall differently. Jeof, along with his father, contacted the City Council with ideas about how to

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maintain the area's natural beauty while making it safe for visitors. As a result, to guarantee the safe arrival of such individuals at the waterfalls, they advised the development of a proper pathway and the installation of appropriate signs.

The council members refused at the first instance to grant permission for the petition but decided to grant the permission after hearing Jeof become passionate and his father encouraging him to go. With the permission of the council and the help of the municipal workers, Jeof and his family renovated the waterfall. To make the interior of the place look warmer, they are sowing new flowers and trees, putting the cleaner pathways, and installing benches. Later, a number of people went to the waterfall to enjoy the splendid scenery and the serenity that Jeof had felt.

On the day of the big reopening, Jeof stayed by the water, feeling joy and success. He had done something essential for many people, not just for himself; indeed, for all visitors who would appreciate the grandeur of the waterfall. Nature had the habit of igniting the best qualities of the person and reminding about the things that really mattered. Jeof came to the mountains, being disappointed in the world, but was leaving them with other feelings.

The waterfall had given him more than a memory; it had connected him to his family, nature, and himself.

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