Pax by Sara Pennypacker

Peter laced his boots. Just as he started to rise, he caught sight of a deer, which bounded into the orchard from the woods beyond. He held his breath as the orchard filled-fourteen deer in all. They began to graze, and a few nibbled delicately at the low branches of the trees.

Peter squatted back down, and the closest one, a doe with a spindly spotted fawn beside her, turned her head to look directly at him. Peter raised his palm slowly, hoping to let her know he meant no harm. The doe moved between Peter and her fawn, but after a while she dipped her head into the grass again.

And then the clear twilight air was split by the screech of a saw biting through wood from behind the barn. The herd startled in unison and peeled away into the darkening woods, their white tails flashing. Before she bounded off, the doe sent another look straight at Peter, one that seemed to say, You humans. You ruin everything. …

Peter took off. Back at the highway, half the cars had their headlights on now, and it seemed they were all trained directly on him. He ducked off the road.

The ground there was spongy and smelled of peat. He was just debating about risking the flashlight when his foot sank with a splash. He grabbed an overhanging branch and pulled himself out, but it was too late—he could feel cold swamp water seeping into his boots. Peter cursed. Not bringing more socks—another mistake. It had better be the last of the trip.

And then, clambering back to higher ground, he made another, much worse, mistake.

His right foot caught on a root and he fell. He heard the bone break—a soft, muffled snap—at the same time he felt the sharp stab. He sat panting with the stunning pain for a long moment. Finally he pulled his foot free and unlaced his boot, wincing at each motion. He eased down the wet socks, and what he saw made him gasp: his foot was swelling so fast that he could actually see it.

Peter rolled his socks back up, nearly crying out at the pain it caused, then gritted his teeth to work his foot back into the boot before it could swell any more. He crawled to a tree and pulled himself upright. He tested his weight on his foot and nearly collapsed again. The pain was far worse than anything he’d felt before it made the broken thumb feel like a mosquito bite in comparison.

He couldn't walk.