



The Narrow Way

D Hakin

GRANDPA



Elias stood at the edge of the world, staring at the thin ribbon of dry earth that stretched toward the horizon. On either side, a vast sea of thick, bubbling brown mud churned like a living thing.



He took his first cautious step, feeling the cracked earth beneath his boots. The path was barely wide enough for his feet, and the heavy scent of the marsh filled the air.



As he walked, the liquid mud began to ripple and hiss, splashing against the sides of the elevated trail. Elias kept his eyes fixed forward, refusing to look down at the murky depths.



THE JOURNEY BEGINS

Halfway through his journey, he reached into his pocket and pulled out a golden compass, a gift from his grandfather. Its steady needle gave him the courage to keep moving through the desolate landscape.



The path grew even narrower, forcing Elias to extend his arms for balance like a tightrope walker. The wind picked up, threatening to push him into the waiting mire.



A thick, gray fog began to roll over the mud, obscuring the path ahead and swallowing the horizon. Elias slowed his pace, feeling for the edges of the dry ground with every careful stride.



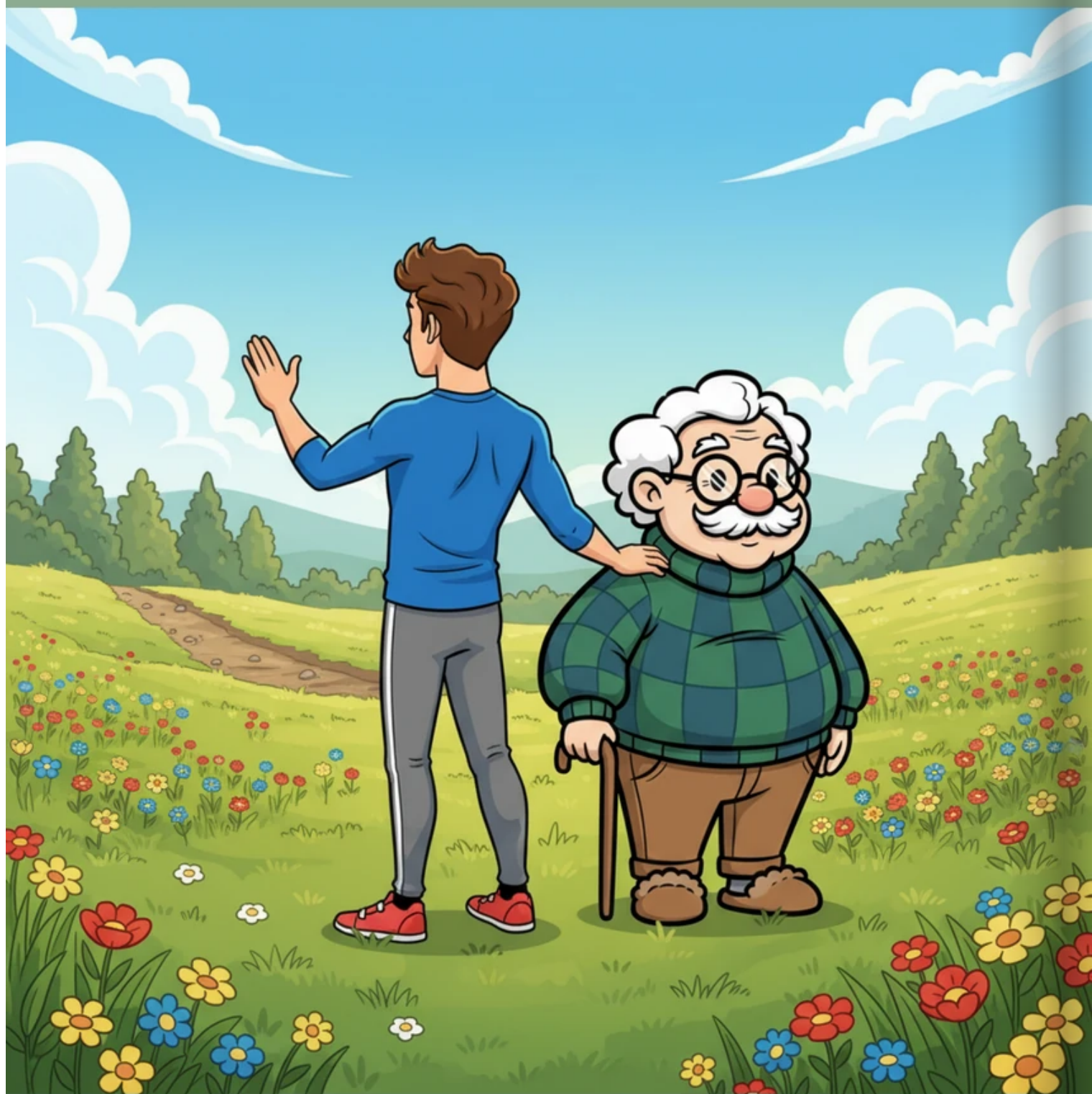
For a moment, the ground trembled, and a section of the path ahead crumbled into the brown liquid. He leaped across the gap, his heart racing as the mud swallowed the fallen earth with a heavy thud.



Through the swirling mist, a faint golden glow appeared in the distance, cutting through the gloom. The sight of the light renewed his strength, and he pressed on with newfound determination.



Gradually, the path began to widen and the bubbling mud gave way to patches of stubborn green grass. The air felt lighter, and the suffocating heat of the marsh finally started to lift.



Elias stepped off the narrow trail onto a vast, sun-drenched meadow filled with wildflowers. He turned back one last time, watching the treacherous path vanish into the distance as he embraced the solid ground.