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# The Adventures of Kid Lightning

*The personal memoirs of a typical teen who experiences what happens when we allow God's way of doing things to take the lead in our lives. He confidently confronts relationship issues with the power of his faith and through the leading of the Holy Spirit. Really, he did!*

# The Adventures of Kid Lightning

This is a picture of me. Ryan Nicholas Wade, Junior. I look like your average, good-looking, everyday clean-cut American kid--right? I wake up every day, fight with my sisters, listen while my mom is yelling at me, and go to school. Typical stuff--right? Wrong!



Maybe life was a lot like that a couple of months ago, but not so typical things have been happening to me lately. Lots of not so typical things. My life has totally changed. I've changed. And, the hardest part of all this stuff to deal with is that there is no one I can tell about it.

I've tried to talk to my friends about it, but they think I've lost my mind. They start talking to me like their parents talk to them..."Okay, Mister. Time for a reality check"...or "I'm trying to be serious here. Can you participate?" My teachers think I need to spend more time with the school's counselor and my parents think I'm in that stage where "kids have an over-active imagination."

First of all, I'm no ordinary kid. I'm more man at fourteen than most grown up men are--or so says Dr. Love and Serenity. (I'll tell you more about them later. Right now, I'm going to explain how this whole thing started by putting it into a book--just to get it off my chest. ) Secondly, most people will think what happened to me is all a dream, something I dreamed after eating spicy food late at night. But it's all true! Every word of it!

It all started last summer while I was a bible camp...(yes, I said bible camp).

## Chapter One

Last summer my parents sent me to the new bible camp up in Wisconsin. They said they wanted me to have a chance to learn about the great outdoors. Well, I didn't want to go. But, my father made it very clear that he didn't want me playing video games all summer long, forgetting when it was my turn to cut grass, and only moving when the fellows dropped by to shoot a few hoops. I can't describe to you how excited he was when they made the announcement about the newly designed camping experience, how it would be free for the youth selected to serve as junior counselors. I wasn't even sitting near my father and I heard him breath out, "Thank you, Jesus. That boy is outta here."

No, I didn't feel unloved when I came home the next day and found him pacing my things in his old army duffle bag. As he packed, he told me stories about camping out under the stars when he was in boot camp...and cooking over a fire, climbing rocks with his bare hands...all the stuff I simply never had any interest in doing. But, I never said anything.

So, off to Camp Holloway I went. And, by bus, no less. Exciting? Wrong...again! Even coming straight from the suburbs of Chicago, having never ridden in any bus but a school bus, I knew this bus ride as the pits! I made the mistake of sitting at in the back--because more than half of the kids going to Camp Holloway turned out to be the girls from our church's Girl Scout Troop and I didn't want any trouble with them. They were a whiney and argumentative bunch--a fact I witnessed watching them attempt to sell cookies.

While sitting in the back I was able to avoid the girls (and I use the term loosely), nobody bothered to fill me in on the fact that all types of gas fumes also rode at the back of the bus.

Neither did anyone warn me that it was the back part of that giant tin can that jerked and swayed with every turn of the wheels. So, I was motion sick by the time we got to camp. I was sick until I got off the bus. Then I got mad.

Everywhere I looked I saw trees. A bunch of trees. Nothing but ordinary looking trees. I could have stayed home and saw trees. Bolingbrook has a nature preserve located right between it and the next city over, Naperville. Oh, I should explain. I wasn't mad about the trees. I was made because I just knew the dumb bus driver had stopped at the wrong place and we must be lost. I couldn't stand the thought of riding any further on that bus!

The bus had stopped in front of three shacks, each one about the size of a two-car garage. There was nothing else to see--just the shacks and the trees. No pool, no lake, no basketball court, no tennis net, nothing. There weren't even any telephone phones...offering the hope that there was a phone we could use to call for help. We were lost in the woods. I could feel it!

So, I walked up to Mrs. Sardia, the church's Youth Education Director, and I asked her in a perfectly polite manner, "Do you realize that this dumb bus driver has gotten us lost up here in the Wisconsin woods?!!!"

Well, if you could have seen how she glared at me you'd think she had never been to church at all--much less spent any time with kids from good homes. "What do you man we're lost," she snorted. (This lady talked with a definite nasal condition.) "We are here where we are should be, young man."

Then she pointed her wrinkled, crooked finger at the sign that hung on the front of one of those shacks standing before us. It read, *Camp Holloway--Camping Site No. 253*.

By then my anger had receded and turned into pure and simple dread. Something seemed to say to me--this summer is gonna be a total waste for you, boy! But, that something was wrong.

Being the naturally good sport that I am, and having accepted the fact that eight weeks of my life were as good as shot, I cooperated when Mrs. Sardia told everyone to take their bags off the bus. One little girl was having a hard time pulling out her suitcase, so I helped her. This gesture of kindness instantly appealed to Mrs. Sardia. I could tell she liked that kind of stuff because she nodded her approval at me and trotted off in the direction of the garage--oops, I mean cabin--that had a sign on it which read "Mess Hall." I said to myself, "I betcha it's a mess all right. The rest of this place fits that description, too."

Helping those dumb little girls with their suitcases was a trip. They couldn't carry anything--at least after they laid eyes on me they pretended not to possess very much physical strength at all. It was obvious to me that the girls had already learned at an early age--if you need anything done requiring brute strength, and you see an African American male, remind him to do it. "What's up? Are you people disable?" I yelled at a group of about five of them. They were just standing by their seats inside of the bus. "Are you waiting for bus service?" I growled at them.

"No mister," said one chubby little red-haired girl with lots of freckles on her fat, fat face. "We're waiting for you. These duffel bags are awfully heavy."

"You're telling me!" I snapped at her. Why this nervy little chubby one looked as if she could carry all the bags at once. She weighed more than I did! "Gimme the bags. What kinda stuff--"

I never did finish that thought. Because then I heard Mrs. Sardia's shrill scream of my name. "Wa-a-a-de. Wa-a-de."

I got a funny feeling she was gonna be yelling my name out like that all summer long! Can you picture how I was feeling then. All those miles away from home, surrounded by 38 kids

who were much younger than me, stuck in the middle of the woods with some old lady yelling

for me. Why her voice was so shrill it sounded like a howl. It sent chills up and down my spine. (Oh, not because I was afraid of her or anything like that. The chills came from the fact that she had already gotten on my last nerve.)

So, I put down the bags I had just picked up and I went to see what the Youth Director wanted. When I reached the spot where she was standing, I asked her in what came out as an unsympathetic tone, "What's wrong with you?"

Poor Mrs. Sardia...looking at her, I instantly felt sorry for her. She looked really bad and she could hardly talk. Whatever was wrong with her had scared her so much that her eyes were as big as quarters. Stretching her eyes must have taken some doing, 'cause she naturally had little bitty squinty eyes. She was pointing at the first cabin and trying to talk. "In there Wade, in the Mess Hall. She's in there. You've got to get her out of there."

"Get who out of there?" I asked. It was obvious that this lady was really upset. But, I couldn't understand why she was coming to me with what no doubt was her problem. You see, as the director she quite naturally inherited any problems that came up. "Why have I got to get her out of the cabin, and who is she anyway?"

I could see Mrs. Sardia was struggling to gain some composure, and she definitely needed to. The kids had started to gather all around us. "Wade, come over here," she instructed me, she didn't ask. For such a skinny old lady this chick was kinda strong. If you could have felt her vice-like grip on my arm as she yanked me around to the other side of the bus, you'd know that.

"Look, Wade," she whispered in a horse, shaky voice. "You're not going to believe this, but there's a creature camped out in the Mess Hall."

"A creature? I asked.

"Well, not exactly a wild-animal-type creature. But she's close to that," chirped Mrs. Sardia. "She looks like some sort of gypsy or witch-doctor. She's got a lot of jewelry hanging all over her and she's sitting in front of a fire repeating chants. Oh, she's frightening."

"Well, why don't you go tell her to leave," I suggested. I was still confused as to why Mrs. Sardia was calling on me to handle this situation.

"Wade, she began to explain slowly, "The rest of the staff won't get here for another hour or so. A strong male person is needed to persuade her to leave right now."

"Yeah," I said. "But we ain't got one. So, because you're in charge, you should do it. It's not like I'm an adult or anything and can tell people what to do."

Still talking in a slow, low voice and looking straight ahead at the Mess Hall, she said, "It's almost like you're in charge here. Your Dad assured me you would be my most eager helper all summer long. You know, my assistant. And I'm assigning you to take care of this little matter."

I was her assistant? For the whole summer? Now--I was really beginning to feel that I would be called on to do everything that nobody else wanted to do. The old "use 'em to death" trick. I had that trick played on me a lot at home--when my father was away and my mother wanted the trash taken out to the curb, she'd always say, "With Dad gone, you're the man of the house." Well, I wasn't going to fall into this trap. I decided to tell Mrs. Sardia that I was going home with the bus driver!

Before I could voice my concerns, she grabbed me by both of my arms, gave me a little shake and peered into my eyes with a firm stare. "Now, you listen to me, Wade," she said. "You're the only man over five feet tall that we've got here. Now go in there and make her leave."

"Oh, no. I'm not the only man here," I said quickly. I had her there. "There's the bus driver. What happened to him?"

"Wade, he's ninety years old or close to it. Didn't you notice he could barely keep the bus on the road? He kept falling asleep! Do you really think he can go in there and assert himself? That creature would probably knock him over with a deep breath!"

Then she crossed her arms and set her narrow lips in a tight line and I could tell she was determined to have her own way. So, I gave up and headed for the Mess Hall. Boy, was I mad.

"Why," I thought to myself, "there's probably isn't anybody in that cabin. She probably just saw her own reflection in a mirror. That would scare anybody. The old goat."

When I got to the door of the Mess Hall, I changed my mind about going in. I had this uneasy feeling about the whole thing. So, I turned around to walk away. But then I saw Mrs. Sardia waving her skinny ole arm at me, indicating that I should go inside. And there was the entire bunch of kids standing in front of the bus with terrified expressions on their faces. One of the boys was gripping his hat in his hand and I could see he was visibly trembling--only when I looked closer I recognized it was the bus driver. No kid, no matter how unattractive, could have that many crinkles in his face.

"Whoa is me. Why me?" I grumbled as I pushed the door open and went inside. Boy, it was dark in there and man did it stink! I couldn't breathe. My throat started burning and even though I couldn't see, my eyes were smarting. I was coughing and waving my arms around. I was choking—I couldn't breathe! Oh, the whole thing was a big mess. I kept thinking how if anybody was in there and watching me, they were no doubt convinced I was crazy or something. But when you can't breathe you act like that.

Suddenly, as if she had been there the whole time—and I'd testify in court that she hadn't been—appeared this little old gypsy lady, sitting down Indian-style in front of a campfire that was burning right inside of the cabin.

“Well...its no wonder...I can't...breathe,” I managed to say between coughs. “What... makes you think...you can build a fire indoors?”

She had been just sitting and staring into the fire. But after I spoke to her, she leaned over and stuck hand in a pot that was close by, and came out with a cup. “Here, drink,” she said, not even bothering to look at me.

“Wow,” I thought. “She sure has a deep voice.”

Well, I took the cup and drank what was in it. And no, I didn't stop to wonder if any funny business was going on with the water in the cup. Or the cup itself or this nice old funny-looking lady who gave me the cup of water. I drank it because I wanted to stop coughing. That's all it was to it. (I kept telling myself that. Even to this day, I'm still saying that.) And to this day, I still don't know what was in the cup she gave me. It stopped my coughing though.

“Thank you very much,” I said. My mother always told me to be polite no matter what. I felt like I should say something else, so I said, “The water helped a lot.”

She didn't say anything. She just kept sitting there staring into the fire that was built right smack in the middle of the Mess Hall. She was looking at the fire so hard that I expected it to do something. So I stared at it, too. But...maybe, I shouldn't have done that...because for some reason the fire seemed to hypnotize me. I couldn't move...not one muscle in my body.

Talk about panicking! Man, was I scared! I tried to scream for help, but no sounds came out of my mouth. “Oh, no!” I heard my mind say. “This is no harmless old lady! This old chick is some kinda witch...look what she's doing to me...I can't move. I can't stop looking at this dark fire...I'm gonna go blind if this keeps up...o-o-oh-oh, listen to me...I can hear every word I'm thinking!”

The whole thing was so weird, like being in one of those Matrix movies. I could hear

myself talking and yet I knew the words were not coming from between my lips. “My thoughts,” I heard my mind scream, “My every thought.” Every devious thought, every lie, every half-truth, every math problem, every page of every Playgirl I had ever secretly read, every fact about Christopher Columbus’ voyage, my first grade spelling tests...all my thoughts present and past could be heard out loud! My thoughts were making noises like a cymbal makes when it’s clanged together...and just when I thought I could take it no longer, I heard my mind say, “Ok, ok, you win. This has got to stop.” And everything around me slowed down. Everything.

While I couldn’t move and my eyes were still fixed on the fire, I began to see the flames of the fire moving in slow motion. Motion so slow I could see molecules—at least what I saw looked like the molecule models we made in school out of styrofoam! It was as if I could see the air molecules intersecting with the fire molecules—with small sparks of electricity dancing off both. I knew I was still hearing my thoughts, but they sounded far away and the only thing I was really aware of was the way the molecules glided pass each other. Wow! Was this even really happening—or was it what was in the cup? Now I knew why they didn’t want us to drink anything at parties.

Then I heard a voice “wailing,” actually wailing, like in one of those Dracula movies. Shocked me, ‘cause I recognized the voice. Took me a minute to place it...it was, it was, it was ME! I was making the noise. Then I realized I was crying. I hadn’t cried since I was ten—four whole years ago. Real men don’t cry.

I guess my crying must have upset the old lady as much as it did me, because all the noise of my “resounding” thoughts stopped. The molecules stopped dancing with each other, and I was able to move my body. I quickly wiped the tears away, embarrassed and suddenly

feeling dead tired. Geez, was I whipped! The effect of this whole situation had taken its toll on my nerves. I wanted to sit down—and suddenly, I was sitting down.

No sooner had I thought it, than a chair appeared out of no where. It wasn't just a plain ole' chair, either. It was one of those comfortable lazyboy chairs, like my mom has in the family room. I was too tired to be frightened by the appearance of the chair. I just gave up and sank down into its cozy cushions.

"Thank you," I mumbled.

I hadn't looked at the old lady yet. I had been a trifle too embarrassed. I knew she was probably still watching me or the fire. "She probably gets her magic abilities from watching that fire," I thought. But, I didn't care where she got 'em. I just wanted her to leave me alone. I didn't care if she never left the Mess Hall, I just wanted to leave. 'Cause once I got out of there, I was going home. Forget camping!

After I rested a little while, and gathered up some courage, I decided to tell the old lady that I was ready to go. I still couldn't see her because the chair wasn't facing the area where she was. "Ma'am," I began...

"Yes," she answered in a soft, melodious voice.

I continued with, "I was wondering if you'd mind, you see I really wish, that is if it's okay with you and all, I mean, I don't want to offend you, make you mad, but you see..."

Then it dawned on me, as I was sitting there making an idiot of myself by stammering like that, her voice had changed! I turned around to look at her and...she had changed! The fire was gone and so was the wrinkled old gypsy. It's the truth! Standing in the same spot where the fire had been was the most beautiful black "sista" I've ever seen. And she was something to see!

## Chapter Two

I found out that even a kid can have a bad heart, because looking at the beautiful black woman standing in front of me I almost had a heart attack. My heart was pounding so loud I could hear it in my ears, and my mouth dropped open wide enough to park a car in it. I couldn't talk, I could only grunt. Don't judge me—how would you have behaved if you found yourself alone with a grown up woman who looked like Halle Berry and Beyonce' rolled into one.

"There, there," she said gently, as she started walking towards me slowly. "I know I've given you a rough time, but I'm going to make it all up to you."

"Yeah, that's right," I thought to myself. "'Cause you are talking to a man." I didn't know what she had in mind, but as I attempted to correct my attitude—*you know, bring it back to a man-level*--I knew one thing...whatever this chick wanted to do, she could. She had proven that. I wasn't going to argue with her, but I didn't want to appear to be a weakling. So I said, "Yeah, you have been a little rough. Nothing I couldn't handle, though. What ya gonna do to correct all this?"

She gently pushed me down into the chair and started giving me a massage. "This will relax you," she said. But I couldn't relax—not with her being so close to me. I had never been this close to a beautiful woman before. My mother told me it wasn't allowed and my father said it wasn't time yet. But it was my favorite day dream come true! I never saw more gorgeous fingers or arms, and they were rubbing away on my shoulders. Wild!

"What's your name?" she asked.

"Ryan Nicholas Wade," I replied, as best I could. I added, "Ryan Nicholas Wade, Junior."

I'm a junior. It's really my Dad's name." It was hard to think with her touching my neck like that. I have never in my life been touch by any female who didn't live in my house. Then, I remembered to say, "But they call me the Nickster, 'cause I'm the master of so many skills."

She chuckled when I said that. (I don't know why she laughed. The girls at school are always impressed when I say that.) Then she said, "Tell me something about the skills you possess."

It wasn't hard to talk about me. Every year at the beginning of school somebody, some teacher, will ask us to stand up and introduce ourselves. So, I was prepared for the question.

"Besides maintaining an impressive 3.7 grade-point-average, I was captain of our varsity basketball team for the last two years, I'm a junior steward at church, I sing in the church choir and I have a lot of positive friends."

I could hear genuine warmth in her voice as she said, "Excellent. Those are excellent skills and qualities to cultivate." Then she added, "And you really must not worry about your friends outside."

Darn, she had a really cool way of talking. Kinda breathless and very soft. I looked up at her face and...wow, was it ever beautiful. She kinda glowed. Why she—then it hit me! Mrs. Sardia and the little kids were still outside! I tried to get up from the chair.

"What's wrong?" she asked, as she pushed me back down into the chair.

"Well, I gotta go. I'm sorry. I really don't want to leave, but I promised Mrs. Sardia, that's the old lady that came in here before I did, I told her I'd get you to leave," I explained.

"Oh, don't worry about that," she laughed. "Their still outside. I've arranged a time suspension for them."

"A what? What's a time suspension?" I asked, all the while hoping whatever it was it didn't hurt.

“Oh, nothing much,” she said, with a shrug of her lovely shoulders. “It’s when you stop time. It’s exactly the same time now as it was when you came in. When you leave, I’ll arrange for only a few minutes to have passed.”

“Wow,” was all I could really say—at first. Then I thought, “This is real life. Not a TV movie. There ain’t no camera to pause!” So, I asked, “But how can you do that? How can a person stop time?”

“Well,” she said reassuringly, “you’re a smart young man. You’ve had some science classes, maybe not quantum physics, but general and Earth science classes.”

“Hecky, yeah,” I nodded in agreement. I was the *mack* in science class.

“Well,” she continued, “you remember that everything is made up of molecules. Moving and vibrating molecules. It’s the vibrate rate that determine whether or not molecules form matter, that is substances, that are liquid or solid or a gas. Remember?”

“Yeah.”

“Well,” she continued, “on my planet we have learned that everything is either time or space, and we’ve learned how to use vibrating molecules to control other vibrating molecules. We can actually speed them up or slow them down. In controlling their rate of vibration, we control the time they are in.”

“And, I’m a witness,” I interjected. “That must be what happened to me a few minutes ago. Things got so slow I saw molecule formations! Honest I did!”

“Yes, I know you did. That was very necessary,” she said. “I had to do that in order to read your brainwaves, which are also molecules in a high rate of motion. But I didn’t allow it to hurt you. And, if you’ll sit down and relax, I’ll explain it all to you.”

I repositioned myself in the chair and found myself thinking that this chick was serious about my relaxing—relaxing at a time like this. “Why do you keep telling me to relax?” I asked.

“When you’re relaxed your consciousness is in an alpha state, which makes it easier for you to understand what’s being said or what’s going on,” she explained. “When you were hearing your own thoughts and feeling like you would go crazy at any moment, you were in the alpha-theta border region of consciousness. But, never mind all that—let’s concentrate on who I am and why I’m here.”

Her story was simple enough. You see, her name was Serenity, and she and this dude named Dr. Love came to Earth to help people of color (black folks and Mexicans, probably). They are from the planet “Iz,” (pronounced “is”), located somewhere in another galaxy that’s too far away from Earth for us to see or even think about. The only problem they’ve encountered in their crusade to help is that they can’t live in our atmosphere unless they assume the body of an Earthling. She said they use to be able to but the atmosphere has changed, that there’s less oxygen on Earth now, and that the oxygen that exists is contaminated. So, they need to borrow the body of a person living on Earth.

When she got to that part of her story, I got scared all over again! Assuming bodies is no small business! That’s serious. “Why you telling me all this?” I asked Serenity, as I jumped up out of the chair. My body stance said I was ready for battle! “I ain’t giving up nothing. No way!”

I didn’t mean to be disrespectful, I mean my mother taught me to watch what I say to adults...but this was different. This stuff was serious and it didn’t sound like anything a kid should be involved in to me! But, Serenity wasn’t shook by my behavior. She just calmly explained, “We can’t use your body without your consent. Don’t worry. We wouldn’t think of forcing you to share it against your will.”

“Well, that’s better,” I grumbled. I straightened up my attitude then...and my body stance. I guess she realized who she was dealing with—the Nickster! ‘Cause I’m no jive-push-over! I guess she could see that. A massage is one thing, but taking my body is another.

“Because, Mr. Wade Junior,” she went on explaining, “our world is a place of peace and love and eternal happiness. We know nothing of inflicting misery or pain. That is our mission here on your

planet. We are here to restore love to your world. When Father-God created your world He put lots of love in it, but evil has caused much of it to decrease.”

Boy, did I feel small. I didn't know what to say. However, being a fourteen year old, African American male raised in the suburbs of Chicago, I knew I couldn't allow myself to feel embarrassment—that's weakness. So, I asserted myself by saying, “It's Junior Wade. My Dad is Mr. Wade and all his friends refer to me as 'Junior Wade' cause I'm the son, you see.”

“Certainly,” she responded. Her smile was as gracious and warm as before. She was certainly a composed person, not at all like most of the grown-up women I know. Dad says women are excite-able because of the “estrogen.” I'm not sure of what that is, but my Dad says we have too much of it in our house.

Getting back to the business at hand, I asked, “Whose body do you have?” I couldn't help but ask. Even for a fourteen year old kid I could tell it was a terrific body.

“This body is my own,” she explained. “The only body I could borrow was that of the old gypsy. I use her body when I need to go out into your atmosphere for long periods of time. But your people don't react well to it for some reason.” She paused as if remembering something, and then asked me, “Do you remember how unpleasant you thought the air to be in here when you first came in?”

“Yeah,” I nodded. I had forgotten how smelly it was in here. And, it was strange that I couldn't really smell that offensive odor any more.

“The air in this cabin now contains an element necessary for our lives. An element your air does not have. It's not harmful to you and it doesn't affect you in any way. But it is necessary for us to breathe.”

“Well, couldn't you use space suits or something like that? Then you could carry your own air anywhere you wanted to go,” I theorized. (I'm pretty smart about science stuff...plus I've seen all the television shows about life in outer space.)

“Yes,” she said patiently. “But then wouldn’t we be easily recognized? How could we go about bringing love to your hate-filled world if we were known aliens? Your world mistrusts anything that is different from what it already knows.”

“Yeah,” I agreed, because I could see where she was coming from. “But, what would you do with my body when you weren’t using it?”

“Then it would be yours to use as you ordinarily use it,” she answered.

“Would you still be inside me?” I asked. Creepy, I thought.

“No. You see whenever we need to use a body we interject a time suspension into the time element of that person’s life, use the body, replace the body and lift the suspension.”

Such double talk, I thought to myself. But, yeah was all I could say. I could see she had me either way I went. How could I not let her have my body. It was my duty to my fellowman to make this sacrifice. The salvation of the world depended on me and that old gypsy lady. It was probably the only real patriotic thing I would ever be asked to do. (Cause going into military service was optional and I wasn’t ever going to join the army.) I had to do this!

Suddenly, I could feel the weight of the world on my shoulders—and it had given me a headache. Serenity seemed to understand my dilemma. She gave me a little shoulder hug and a kiss, just like my mom does when I’m upset about something.

“Would you like to meet Dr. Love,” she asked gently. “Perhaps if you knew him it would help you to make the decision to lend him your body.”

“Lend *HIM* my body!” I shouted. “Now wait a minute. This is too much. I don’t mind lending you my body. I’m almost sure you’ll take care of it. But, I can’t just lend my body to everybody! My Dad doesn’t like me loaning out my stuff anyway. Imagine what he’ll have to say about my body!”

I was very angry with Serenity. After all, now days a person can't be too careful. If she knew anything at all about Earth, she should know kids aren't suppose to talk to strangers, much less LEND THEM THEIR BODIES! How dumb did she think I was?

"Relax, Junior," said Serenity, the tone of her voice was still gentle and patient. It was amazing how she never lost her cool. "Allow me to contact Dr. Love and arrange a meeting for you."

I was busy shaking my head, trying to appear as calm about this whole situation as Serenity did, yet firm in my refusal. But she wasn't paying me any attention. She walked to the center of the cabin, held out her arms and announced, "We'll just put everything back the way it was when we got here."

In a blink of an eye, the room was filled with tables and chairs! The walls had camp posters on them, there was a food service stand and the whole place looked like the inside of a ...mess hall. Then with a twist of her hand, as she said, "Oh, we must not forget the galley," the back wall opened up into the kitchen.

I almost lost my lunch! "How'd you do that?" I yelled. (I couldn't believe I was asking that same question again.) This chick was beautiful, but she was working my nerves.

"It's here," she answered and showed me a slender gadget that was in the palm of her hand. It looked like a flash drive. "Whenever we need to modify your environment, we simply reduce it in size, store it in our enviro-compactor and restore it later. It's simple."

I was holding my stomach and wondering how I got trapped in what had to be a made-for-television movie, when Serenity calmly said, "Now Junior, it's time for you to go back outside. You'll find everything to be the same as it was when you came in. Remember, the time suspension. Don't say anything to anyone about what has taken place here and I'll contact you later tonight after everyone's gone to sleep."

Everything will be the same! For some reason I didn't believe that would be true. Nothing would ever be the same again—at least not for me. Not after everything I had just seen.

“What about the gypsy?” I asked. The old gypsy was still sitting on the floor, now surrounded by tables and chairs. Her fire was gone out, but all the ashes were still there.

“She was here when Mrs. Sardia came in,” Serenity explained. “So she must be here when we lift the time suspension. Only, she will walk out with you and leave the camp grounds. Mrs. Sardia will assume you accomplished your mission.”

That’s how it went. I found myself opening the door to the Mess Hall and stepping back outside. Once again, there was Mrs. Sardia and all the little kids. The old gypsy walked out behind me, then scurried around the side of the building, and disappeared into the woods. We all watched as she left. I was completely surprised when then the kids began to cheer my name—*Wade, Wade, Wade!* Mrs. Sardia just stood there slightly smiling and nodding her head in approval as she looked at me. I’m not sure—but it might have been “renewed respect” glowing in her eyes. Not knowing what else to say—and not feeling too sure of anything that had just happened—I told them all that everything was okay.

And we began to set up camp as Mrs. Sardia planned. I saw the bus as it drove off, weaving and bobbing. I can’t explain it, but I was glad it had left me behind.

*Hope you enjoyed this excerpt from*

## The Adventures of Kid Lightning

Based on the popular theme of super heroes, the Junior Wade series is an engaging way to introduce youth to how the kingdom of God is present and at work in our lives today.

The **super heroes** in this series are the nine fruits of the Spirit found in Galatians 5:22-23. Each episode is an inspiring read which illustrates how a youth living in today’s world can cultivate both a Christian character and a Christian lifestyle that would be pleasing to Our Lord Jesus Christ. Junior Wade’s life is comprised of all the usual issues faced by today’s youth. He conquers all by applying the power of his faith and through the leading of the Holy Spirit (evidenced in his life as the nine spirits).

For more information about this series, please see the Written Words Publishing Cooperative’s website [www.thewordartists.net/bookshelf](http://www.thewordartists.net/bookshelf).