



A Mushroom Walk

by Jenny Phillips



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“Martha! Otto!” Mom called me and my twin brother, Otto. “Let’s go on a mushroom walk.”


We left our farmhouse in the Black Forest, Germany.

The morning sun slanted across the hills and valleys as we walked on a little dirt path. Mom took our hands. “I’ve told you before that some mushrooms are delicious and healthy, but some are very dangerous.”





“Today I am going to start teaching you how to know which mushrooms are safe.”




We entered the cool, quiet forest. A little brook gurgled over mossy rocks. Mom continued talking to us.

“Today, I also want to teach you about another kind of safety—sexual abuse safety.”




“What is sexual abuse?” Otto asked.

“That is when someone touches the private parts of your body or takes pictures of you naked. Things like that,” Mom explained.



“Does that really happen?” I asked.
We paused by a tree to watch a
squirrel scamper around the branches.
“Yes,” said Mom, “unfortunately.
The Bible teaches us how wrong it
is to harm a child in any way, but
sometimes people make really wrong
decisions.”

A vibrant, stylized illustration of a forest scene. In the foreground, a large, fluffy brown squirrel sits on a green bush, holding a nut in its paws. The background features a winding blue stream, several trees with green and yellow foliage, and a soft, hazy landscape. A speech bubble is positioned in the upper center of the image.

“Often it can even be people you know. So, I want to teach you some important things.”

I reached up for Mom's hand again.

"Thank you so much for teaching us and wanting us to be safe, Mom!"

Mom squeezed my hand. "Oh, look," she said, kneeling down. "These mushrooms are delicious and totally safe."

We helped her pick them and put them in her basket.





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As Martha and Otto walk through the forest, their mother teaches them about what kinds of mushrooms are safe to eat. Their mother also teaches them about something else very important: sexual abuse. Join Martha and Otto as they learn what to do if anyone ever asks them to do something inappropriate with their bodies.

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