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| What is the story? | “Chasing Adventure: The Monster that Never Was” follows Mark Kardash, a then-seven-year-old boy, on a vacation in Crimea. Having watched a film about a giant squid sometime before going on the vacation, Mark mistakes an unknown object floating near him for the legendary fearsome beast. Becoming obsessed with catching the animal, he plans an entire hunt mission, with every realistic and non-realistic detail one could ever imagine. But deep down, he knows that his plans are simply attempts to go on an adventure. The craving for that adventure lies way deeper in his life. Medical malpractice resulted in Mark been born with cerebral palsy, being limited in many aspects of an average person’s life. Due to his condition, he grew up an introvert, isolating himself from almost everyone besides his family. To express himself, he used his imagination to get to anywhere he desired. The memoir follows the author on two levels: In 2007, Crimea, and in the present, as he reflects on how using his imagination became an obstacle to recognizing his real problem. |
| What is the tension? | The understanding, by the author, of the significance of the squid incident over ten years after it occurred. The author reflects on the events with a much more mature mind, realizing that it was never about capturing the supposed squid. The entire plan, the quest, and what minuscule preparations were done, turned out to be the author’s attempt to go on an adventure. They were merely giving him a chance to escape reality, and travel, at least in the mind, away from the limitations of cerebral palsy. |
| Who is the reader? | Even though the memoir revolves around the author’s obsession with the monster, it is mostly a story about living a life with cerebral palsy, and how one often uses their imagination to compensate for things they cannot have. It attempts to relate to everyone: Useful to read for non-disabled people, as it gives them a chance to enter a disabled person’s mind, and become more aware of what it means to have a disability. It can also be useful for people with special needs, as it may offer them a better understanding of the self, the way they think, and perhaps change their life for the better. In general, it can be useful for anyone considering themselves a dreamer. |
| What are the themes that the reader cares about? | Imagination, Children’s Innocence, Life with a Disability, Escape from Reality, Craving for Adventure, Memories, Life Lessons, Understanding of the Self. |