The man scanned the exhibit. Noah saw his eyes rest briefly on the hole in the wall. He put his hand on the boy's back and escorted him to the door.

Once outside, Noah rushed toward the zoo exit. He was so confused that he felt sick. So much had happened in just a few hours. He pushed through the clutches of the turnstile, raced across the parking lot, and ran down the sidewalk next to Walkers Boulevard.

At his house, he dropped on the couch and sat almost without moving until his parents returned home. He spent the evening in a daze and went to bed before dark. Night fell, but he was unable to sleep. He lay in bed, scanning the shadows in the half-moon light that filtered through the window, thinking about the events at the zoo. His gaze happened upon his jacket, which he'd tossed onto a chair. He saw something sticking out of the pocket— something he hadn't put there. He climbed out of bed, walked to the chair, thrust his hand into the pocket, and pulled out a piece of crumpled paper.

This time, it was exactly what he expected—another note from his sister. During the commotion at the Forest of Flight, a bird must have slipped it into his pocket. He smoothed out the paper and sat on his bed to read it. When he finished, he clutched it to his chest and declared, "I cannot do this alone."