

Special place

By Elizabeth Annis

Dummerston School, Grade 8

Thirteen years, living in one house on the same property
And yet, every time I venture into the woods I discover something new.
I'll stumble into a small clearing,
The light flooding in,
Specks of dust glinting off the beams,
The view is one from a fairy tale,
But when I go in search of it again it cannot be found,
Or once I am there the magic has been lost and there's just a stump and some ferns.
I walk for what seems like hours but I can still see the clearing ahead.
It seems like every step I take the light gets farther away.
I make it to a place that seems like a dream,
The grass hip-high as I run,
The array of flowers of every color of the rainbow.

The next day I must venture back.
I find the clearing again but the magic is lost and once again it is a field.
The beauty has been lost,
The dream of this place has been shattered as I turn away in disappointment.

The next time I venture through the woods I stumble across a grove of trees.
They look as though they have been planted at a regular distance from each other,
As if someone came along and planted them in rows.
The ground is orange from the dropping needles,
The wind whistles through the trees,
The branches squeak together almost like nails on a chalkboard.
Then it is quiet.
The quiet penetrates me like a blade, and then the sudden feeling of being watched,
I hear another squeak and start sprinting toward home.

After that I stay out of that grove.
I'll venture down the hill and discover tree stumps and stool-like logs,
They all look freshly cut but I know no one has cut in the woods for years.
The mystery still has not been uncovered.
Every time I venture into the woods a new mystery arises.
Each time I see something new
The next time I look, the magic has been lost or the place has again been hidden.
But
Every now and then the magic finds its way back to the spot.

Upcoming Prompts

Get published in the *Reformer!*

The kitchen table. What happens at your kitchen table? Tell a story about a memorable moment at that table. If you don't have a table, or feel so inclined, create fiction. *Alternate: Door.* Use these words in a story or poem: "I reached the door and knocked loudly ..."
Due Friday.

General. Submit your best non-prompt general writing. *Alternate: Hunting.* Share your favorite hunting stories, or tell us how you feel about hunting. **Deadline Oct. 30.**

Future prompts and to submit:
youngwritersproject.org

Star

By Kyle Champney

Brattleboro Union High School, Grade 9

I am a star
one of many,
I am unique,
ever changing,
never weak,
never falling,
floating in space.
Living my life
everyone watching
laughing at me,
for being myself.....

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Midnight

By Vaughn Kestle Willis

Leland and Gray Union High School, Grade 12

Clattering window panes
Fill my night
My blood rushes
Filled with fright.

There is nothing to be afraid of
It is only the wind
While drowned stumps
And long birds swim.

You stare at a mirror,
Your shadow is
Not your shadow
But your reflection.

Night's curtain covers
Your door
It creeps up
Silently besides your bed.

It comes to cover
You with red
Filling you to
The brim with dread.

Tears and distant
Whispers come
From the outside
Night,

Cold hands and a
Dead flashlight,
Woken from the
Chilly ark of sleep.

You see wavering
Shadows thrown by
One candle, echoing,
Twenty years later,
With your own children.

Hollywood

By Heidi Snell

Leland and Gray Union High School, Grade 10

With eyes so much purer than mine,
He'd keep on gazing at me
with a look reserved for me alone.
We'd walk to the clearings
on those high hills,
My wandering dog, sniffing away
right by my side
Following me with wide eyes,
his shameless spirit always with me.
There are no goodbyes for my dog who has died.
We don't now and never did lie to each other
Someday I'll join him right there
Hollywood
My star in the sky



Young Writers Project is an independent nonprofit that engages students to write, helps them get better at it and connects them with authentic audiences for their best work.

YWP provides writing prompts for this newspaper series; maintains youngwritersproject.org, a supportive online community for students; trains college mentors to provide students with feedback; and builds *Digital Writing Classrooms* for schools and afterschool programs. For more go to: ywpschools.net.

THANKS: YWP depends on the generosity of businesses, foundations and individuals to keep going. Today we'd like to offer special thanks to:

Physician's Computer Company

This Winooski-based company develops software for pediatric offices across the USA.

The essence of love

By Sara Engerman

Bellows Falls Union High School, Grade 10

(Excerpt: Full story at youngwritersproject.org)
Throughout a path that you must travel
Ahead lie surprises, worries, happiness and pain
While on your journey strength, courage and independence you'll finally gain.
Keep in mind the path is a necessity — hopes, dreams and memories are packed with in the gravel.

As Amy arises from a field of flowers
She hears a noise among the trees
Her hair is cast aside as if from a gentle breeze.
She turns around into a club and dark black clouds are now hers.
As she awakens in a cold dark room
She hears the voice of a man.
"Peter," it says, "do not sulk for the poor maiden. You made a mistake that any one can."
"But how could I hurt a creature so delicate?"
His voice sounds like chimes out of tune.
As she gathers her senses she realizes that a man is walking towards her.
With shouting in the background she stands to run.
But this man reassures that if she trusts him they can leave in the path of the sun.
She takes his hand.
As she gathers her skirts they run off in the path of the sun. ...