Escape

By: Taryn Lahey

Unchah looked over the landscape, the rising sun bathed the trees in the land below with the dawn light; the way the birds sang their morning songs as they awoke from their sleep, it was beautiful.

He slowly turned his head at the sound of the bushes rustling behind him. His younger siblings, Subah and Ukessi stumbled into the morning light.

The bears chuckled as they play-fought in the light of early dawn. Unchah growled at the younger bears to sit, and of course, knowing Unchah wasn't one to be messed with, they listened.

The bears sat on the cliff edge until the sun was a quarter into the sky. Unchah gazed over the land, grateful for all it gave the bears.

They were startled by the sight of birds flying towards them, their beaks opening only to let out a warning call. Smoke rose over the trees a few kilometers away from the bears.

FIRE!

They knew soon enough that the flames would engulf the entire forest.

Scared out of their minds, fearing the flames with a burning hatred akin to that of a predator to prey, they ran. They knew they couldn't run forever, that soon the waves of adrenaline given to them alongside the shock would subside, but they kept going.

Eventually, after traveling a few hundred meters, they were tired.
Although they were scared, their fatigue overtook them.
They slumped down under some bushes to rest.

Subah and Ukessi soon noticed that the bushes had berries on them. While the two bears gorged upon the meal, Unchah was studying the terrain before him.

Ahead was an expanse of fields, among those fields sat some trees, and a small pool fed by a stream. It was unlikely, but perhaps fish swam in the miniscule lake?

Only one way to find out.

Unchah made his way towards the pond, his siblings following behind him. Soon, they reached the pool. Uncha found no fish. The bears decided to rest for the remaining hours of the day.

Unchah awoke early and looked to the horizon. The sun was rising.

He snarled at his siblings to wake up. He knew they needed to get going- To find a new home. So they set off on another journey.

After about three hours of travel with frequent rest stops, they came to a cliff overlooking a large valley full of trees. Unchah was about to settle down when a small falcon swooped across the sky.

His squawks foretold danger in the valley. Hidden in the trees sat a human city. Unchah tried to thank the bird, but it continued on, telling them of a valley similar to this one just north over the mountains.

Before Unchah could respond, the falcon swooped out of view. So they set off again.

By the time the sun set, they had reached the valley the bird spoke of. It was perfect. The bears settled down, and lived good lives for many years.