When the Fire Escaped the Sky

By Calliegh Parkins

Age 17

The air was filled with the scent of pine and the noise of the waterfall as it splashed on the rocks beneath. A magnificent sunset streamed through the trees, casting a spell over all who saw it. The mountains stood like jagged shadows against the glowing sky. The clouds glowed a burning red; it was as if the sky had caught on fire

Out of the rocky outcrop, a majestic bear emerged.

The bear's fur was the deep colour of the earth, ragged from the long summer of wandering. The bear moved with a slow certainty as though each step he had taken down the path had been done a thousand times. As if an invisible force were before him, he stopped and looked westward as if to survey his kingdom.

A beautiful scene lay before him-a field of grass as it swayed in the gentle breeze, a cascading waterfall as it hurtled down the steep mountainside, and the trees a hue of indigo. The sky burst forth its exquisite light, causing the river to turn a molten gold.

From deep inside his being, the bear knew that winter was coming. There would be no salmon to eat, and the berries would be withered. For weeks, he had been eating and preparing for this glacial period, but right now, the world seemed frozen in time.

In the view, a boy filled with dreamy aspirations sat cross-legged on a boulder, a sketchbook spilled across his knees. The boy had been carefully trying to capture the stunning scene that lay before him, but the colours kept shifting before he could catch up. He felt a pang of frustration, wondering if he could ever do justice to this beauty. He looked up before him, and a bear towered above him.

The bear stared, its eyes seeming to penetrate the boy's very soul. There was no fear, just a profound understanding.

Both stared. Neither moved.

The sky deepened in colour, and shadows fell on the surrounding area. The boy's pencil hung motionless in his fingers; all was forgotten. For that still, timeless moment, the same elements bound the two together, the fading day, and the quiet loftiness of the world before them.

The bear finally turned and disappeared back to where it had come. The boy sat there for a long while, watching as the last glorious streaks of colour faded beyond the horizon. He felt a sense of loss as the bear vanished, leaving behind a void in the landscape.

Dusk settled, and he finally got up and began to walk home. He couldn't capture the beautiful scenes, but it didn't matter. Some moments belong only to memory, where they can be cherished forever. As he walked, he realized that the most beautiful moments in life are often the most fleeting, and that's what makes them so precious. And that moment would linger forever in his mind.

The End