

# Forgotten Paradise

The sun cast pastel colours upon the sky as I raced across the backyard. The hot summer air flew through my hair. Soon, I stumbled to a stop, at the edge of a lake at the end of our backyard. The darkening sky manipulated the shadows to portray an array of shapeless forms in the shallow water. Though I knew not to think twice about them.

The sun slowly disappeared behind the horizon and the lake seemed to light up under the stars. I slowly reached down and traced the surface of the water with my finger tips, letting ripples dance across the lake.

I closed my eyes to listen closely to the crickets and frogs chirp, as the fireflies flew up from the long grass and landed at my feet. I leaned down to catch the flickering bugs. They prickled across my palm, as the wind grew stronger causing the water to rise to my feet.

I sat down and let my bare feet sink into the water. It came rushing up to my knees, wetting the edges of my night gown. Quickly the wind got stronger and soon I had to hold on to the rocks to keep myself upright.

There was a low rumble from the North and I could see the low hanging clouds in the distance. A strike of lightning crashed through the sky, lighting up the farmland that sat across the lake.

Slowly the clouds crossed the sky and a heavy downpour settled over our town. I was soaked within seconds and the humid air made the water stick to my skin like a blanket. I had to squint to see the land in front of me.

of the doctor's gloves and the smell of hand sanitizer that seemed to sit at every corner. I didn't know how much longer I could take it before I went crazy.

The plain white colour seemed to leech all the thoughts from my mind. I couldn't even remember a song to hum. The toes of my right foot wriggled under my blank sheets as I tried to imagine the river I had last set my eyes upon.

The sky dancing with stars and the moon glowing like no other. The hot breeze is what I missed most. The feeling of it on my skin and pumping through my lungs. Along with the sound of bugs and frogs singing to tones only known to them and yet harmonizing like a symphony.

I snuggled under the thin chilly sheets and let the found memory take over my imagination and soon the grass was filled with fairies and the lake with mermaids. Before I knew it I had fallen asleep.

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Weeks went by and the thought of my lakeside fantasy was slipping away. I was brought home on August the fifteenth and for the rest of the summer I sat at the window looking out at the river afraid I would lose the memory.

I lived in a wheelchair for weeks after we got home. A blanket constantly lay across my lap. My mother always thought I was cold, though I didn't have the heart to tell her I was sweating underneath it. It was all I found comfort in. The soft pink fabric

kept me company while my parents shouted at each other upstairs when they thought I wasn't listening.

It was usually about my accident and who's fault it was that I had gotten hurt. First, my dad would come down and turn on the T.V. and my mom would follow soon after with a red nose and puffy eyes. I never said anything. I didn't want to make it worse.

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School started after that, and the teachers were no better than my parents. Constantly yelling about the fact I wasn't speaking. A few weeks later, and a visit from a kind man, they came to the conclusion that I was a mute due to the trauma in my brain. I wanted to yell at them, but something was stopping me.

October came quickly and my parents stopped fighting, but started growing away from me. Like they were hiding something. I felt like divorce was around the corner, but I didn't know how to ask.

One night after the sun went down my mom said she had to do some groceries and my dad said he was going to do some work in the garage, which left me in the house alone.

I walked over to my chair that had been put in the corner overlooking the lake, although the curtain had been shut. My mom wanted me to stop looking out there so much.

The fabric felt familiar to my hands as I sat down. I reached up and pulled the curtain away expecting the deep night sky, but was met by an array of fairy lights and

the smiles of my parent. A smile crept upon my face as I walked out the door to meet them.

The lights hung from trees and lined the pond. Pillows and blankets were laid out in the centre of our lawn, just close enough to hear the water running past us. It was a quiet night, but if you listened closely you could hear the orchestra singing to their own harmony.

"They missed you," My mom whispered in my ear as I sat down on the blankets.

"We missed you too," My dad said sitting on my left, my mom joining his side. We sat there for hours until my eyes felt heavy and hung low. I cuddled under my parents arms, forgetting the possible divorce and my memory loss.

"I love you," I whispered almost inaudible, but I could tell my parents heard. I finally found my words and I planned to use them.

1500 words