

The Spring

By Emily Wohlstadter

I had already memorized the path of the spring. Its veering from left to right carved a mark against the side of the hills and valleys. The bubbling of the fish as they channeled the currents of the water was always a sobering sound I sat still to hear.

The spring flowed forth. Its twisting and turning of the cold water beckoned me to follow it. I began to take short strolls to as far as the rocky ground could allow. I lied awake at night listening to the calming movements of the water down beneath me. I dwelled upon the coming of the sun to wash the white light of the moon away. The sun brought rays that shone down through the spring, igniting a pathway sculpted into the side of a hill that lead me to the never ending flow of the water.

The spring had been my gateway—a gateway away from troubles of life and civilization. The spring's many purposes I took full advantage of. It taught me of the values of self worth; just as the spring flowed—its power over large obstacles and whirlpools—as did I do the same. The water provided me with a place of solitude, nourishment, and most importantly escape.

Day after day I dreamed of a journey to pursue the many depths and treasures of the spring. I began to put away silver ingots harvested from the last of my crops. Within a few months of this practice, I put away enough to gather supplies for a journey down the enchanted spring. The fall air was crisp and refreshing, unlike the heat of summer. Winter was approaching as rapidly as the flow of the spring.

The day had come in late November. I dragged the canoe I had purchased to the rocky bank where the bay met the flowing spring. I loaded my canoe and pushed off from the shore and succumb to the graces of the water. The air had been bitter that day and the clouds had clogged

the sky but once I drifted down the currents of the spring, all had cleared into a bright and warm day. I glanced the palm of my hand above the water as the canoe rocked against the water's rapids. All was calm. The birds sang as the breeze blew through the bangs of my hair.

I had finally found true meaning in my life. The shore I had said goodbye to a few moments before was no longer visible, nor my house perched upon the top of a hill. The peaceful flowing of the water turned to a much quicker flow, one that almost frightened me as I came upon it, but yet, soothed my worries all together for I realized it was only the pathway of that mighty spring.

I drifted into my subconscious for far too long, hours perhaps, to only realize later the spring had grown to almost a small river which I dwelled upon to call, "the great of the spring," and it seemed as though the spring had ended—my true journey had ended with this dwelling. A fallen tree hung over the great of the spring in the way of all who passed by the surface of it. There was no chance to turn back towards my spring—the part I knew the most and that had once been never ending. The water quickened and unlike the water of the spring, the great of the spring could not flow and overpower obstacles and whirlpools—it could only succumb to them. Just as the dead of winter strikes, my canoe did the same.

My body drifted beneath the fallen tree. I did not scream or make a sound for I knew the spring. I could feel the cold water enter my mouth—still as refreshing as the day I first set my eyes upon it. The crystal rays of the sun shone down beneath the surface of the water. I did not fight the flowing currents of the spring anymore. My hope had been rekindled as time slowed and caught up with the softening gasps from my lungs. The bubbling of the fish provided me with a final sobering sound as the spring flowed forth—carrying me with it in its arms.