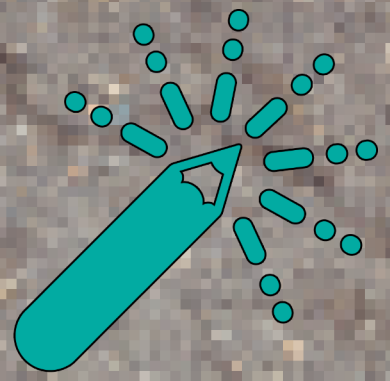


# Spark

## Young Writers



Issue 26 April 2023

WRITING  
WEST  
MIDLANDS

The great and the very, very hard thing about Spark Young Writers' Magazine is that there is no topic, no brief, and rarely a theme. Your piece will be considered whether it's a story, a poem, a script, non-fiction, or a song, so long as it is fewer than 500 words long.

It's a deliberate policy so that any writer can have free reign to write anything in any way -- while still getting to experience what it's like writing professionally for magazines. For as well as the deadline, there is also the fact that this time just slightly under half of all submissions were rejected.

Several of those were stories where something was too unclear, or there was clearly more that could be done. So as I've said to each of those writers, I hope they will resubmit their piece for a future issue.

There are times, though, when something is submitted and it's so good, so right, that it goes straight in the issue. It's a piece that goes straight into the issue but does not leave my head, that gets made the Editor's Choice. This time it's "3am" by Doroti Polgar.

I never know in advance if I'm to be the editor of the next issue, but it's getting to read writing like this that will make me cross my fingers when the email comes in about Issue 27.

William Gallagher, editor

Spark Young Writers Magazine is a publication of Writing West Midlands. We support creative writers and creative writing across the region. More information about us can be found on our website: [www.writingwestmidlands.org](http://www.writingwestmidlands.org).

This magazine features writing from children and young people aged 8 - 20 who live in the West Midlands of the UK. It is also available to read online at [www.sparkwriters.org](http://www.sparkwriters.org).

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# 3am

## Doroti Polgar

“Tell me this: when did you start seeing the world differently?”

“When we started painting happiness onto children’s hospital walls,  
creating our own language before you could talk.  
When the waves buried our names beneath the sand.  
When we slept in waiting rooms, cannula in your hand.  
When I translated your hospital appointments.  
When they reminded me of those times.  
When I unwrapped a penguin teddy on your PICU bedside.  
When we kept a caterpillar in a shoebox until it learned to fly.  
When we realised we’ve never seen our dad cry.  
When we learnt not everyone’s home is a plane journey away.  
When our parents watched armed police close streets from our bedroom windows  
on Saturday.  
When we met the family of the one who saved your life.  
When they took us through photos of his life.  
When people donated to save up for our trip down under.  
When we witnessed why primary school taught us Childline’s number.  
When she brought me a necklace for taking the knife from her son’s mind.  
When the consultant who welcomed us into this country retired.  
When we signed to a deaf child and he smiled back.  
When we found out not everyone’s mum loves their dad.  
When a journalist broke a promise as you were interviewed live.  
When I drove for the first time, singing to road signs.  
When we found out about a friend’s death from the local news.  
When you told me we’d have made a good couple.  
When I agreed.  
When we realised party politics doesn’t care about us.  
When our grandma took us to where she grew up.  
When we signed Santa on Christmas packages to keep you believing.  
When I tried to remember his laugh more than his leaving.  
When they locked our confidence inside school lockers, running away with the code.

When mum told us her parents worked overtime to buy her a winter coat.  
When we never had an answer each time she asked how we got those bruises.  
When our dad told us one day we’ll appreciate classical music.  
When I read Dandelion Wine and it reminded me of you.  
When I read Dandelion Wine and it reminded me of myself.  
When a poem I shared reminded a stranger of themself.  
When I found an orchestra inside my earphones one night.  
When we realised our dad was right.  
When I plaited an eight-year-old’s hair after her mother died.  
When I held two mothers’ nine-week-old for the first time.  
When her tiny fingers grabbed onto strands of my hair.  
When I made a wish for her world to be a little more fair.  
When they asked me how I’m always smiling.  
When we answered that today is a rare thing.  
When we started exchanging sleep for 3am questions.  
When we started thanking our teachers after every lesson.  
When we found there is happiness between every line break,

breaking into the world differently.  
When you asked me when did I start seeing the world differently.  
When I had to think about it.  
When I told you that I’m happy not despite but because of it all.  
When the waves whispered our names, our stories and their breaks back onto  
the shore.  
When you told me no one has made you see it like this before.”

# A Robbery by Night

Simran Kaur

I was walking upon the cobblestones of London one night. The light shone in the path like phantoms in a black mirror. Suddenly I felt a hand upon my shoulder. I saw a man. He had ragged clothes, unkempt hair and his shoes were worn.

“Is this Mr Wimple’s Bank?” asked he.

“Yes,” I replied.

“Can I help?” I asked.

“No, thank you, miss,”

The next morning I got out of my bed, totally forgetting about yesterday’s incident. I sat upon the table and tucked my chair in but in the newspaper a surprising headline on the front page caught my eyes: “Mr Wimple’s Bank Robbed!”

I could not believe it.

When the clock stroke nine I knew I must be off.

A crowd started to form around something. I asked a young woman what was happening as she left the crowds from being at the front. “A man is being arrested for the robbery,” she said.

Suddenly from the crowd darted the same young ragged man from that night. He knelt at my feet and begged me to prove that he was innocent. Such tears in his eyes. But the constable came and grabbed him by the arm.

“Sorry, miss,” he said to me while nudging the prisoner.

It seems he was caught with diamonds that were formerly kept in the bank. But all the while the prisoner was trying to explain otherwise.

The next day I walked along the road I walked past the bank. I asked one of the people there where John Diggins was but he said he had left on foot a few minutes ago. He was the brother to my best friend and it seemed strange that he had left.

I ran to catch him up. Finally I caught sight of him.

“Mr Diggins!” I called.

He seemed startled but when he saw it was me he calmed down.

“Where are you going?” I asked.

“Far away”

“Why?” Only now did I notice his new expensive hat.

I asked if he had heard of the theft after he did not reply. He simply mumbled something then went on.

I started to have suspicions. A startling thought came into my mind; ‘could he be the thief?’

“You know, John, you can tell me the truth.”

He turned with tears in his eyes. His conscience seemed to have won. “I did it!” he cried.

And he told me that a while ago he had fallen into debt from gambling. He asked a poor man to wait out outside the bank so that he could help him. The man stood outside for three nights but nothing came. On the fourth night he gave him diamonds from the bank to blame him. Now how he regrets!

I helped him to secretively go to another country to hide for his sister’s sake and told the truth about the ragged man to the public. He was released but the real guilty man was never a prisoner by law, but always a prisoner of his conscience.

# The Oral Hygiene Crew

## Mafoya Amogunla

Your teeth are amazing. Oh yes, it's true.  
Your mouth is the ship and they're the crew.

Incisors here has something to say  
That'll make you so happy, you'll dance and sway:  
"Eat really healthy and you're being good.  
So we don't give you an ache and become quite rude."

Canine is here to give some tips:  
"Don't talk, just seal your lips."  
The thing he says is "floss, floss, floss."  
So, the crew stays happy and doesn't turn to moss."

Molars are down to give you a message:  
So, just drop the act and stop eating his sausage  
"My name as you know is 'mouthimus molar'  
And please just stop drinking so much cola."

Last but not least is the amazing tongue,  
Powerful as a sage; wise as a monk.  
"I have to say this was quite fun  
...our adventure begins, we've gotta run!"

# Memories

## Eva Burbidge

Alone in the woods, I can feel eyes on me - not friendly joyous eyes but staring murderous eyes. I would not go like my sister; I would not go without a fight. I stood up and took a few trembling steps then I fell!

My life flashed before my eyes - I knew I wasn't dead, but all breath had left me. Then my mind forced me to see her face; I would not cry, I would not give in. She was there - I saw her.

It was snowing, we were zooming along on a sled shrieking with happiness. I knew that was the memory that would last forever. Then I hit the icy water. It worked its way down my veins pulling me down. I fought my way to the surface.

Finally, a gasp of air - maybe I would make it? Then I saw Death's cold stare consume me, I saw the water swirling. I was being pulled, pulled down - I would not give in. If I was to die here alone, I would die with her face imprinted in my mind....

# Nightmare

Sophie Nock

I come at night, when they do not expect to be disturbed. No-one ever does expect such an interruption past midnight, when the clock pretends it's creeping towards a new day, but the world just drops deeper into darkness. I do not knock on doors or hand over a calling card. I slip through windows, chimneys, cracks in rooftops – their carpentry may be perfection, they may have solid mortar, sturdy walls – but no-one keeps me out. There is no charm or charlatan to shield from me, no substance which can harm me. I am not a thing, not a person. I exist only in your imagination; something far more powerful than most believe.

They remember me afterwards, see me in the day. I stand among the shadows, watching. Their sanity drops slowly away, shed like snakeskin. It tastes sweet.

Sometimes they run, but I never lose my prey. How can I, when I live within them? When I come from their dreams and fears, tangled together – when I inhabit all that they are and have ever wanted to be, how could they escape? It just isn't possible.

The children can be welcoming. They spot me when they wake and wave, perhaps smile. They do not recognise me yet, are not old enough to know the dangers. Adults are different; they only know of me from stories, but it is enough for them to be scared. Lost sanity may be sweet, but fear – that has a taste of its own, and even when I let them run a little way before I follow, it drips behind and leaves a trail. It makes the moment of their end that little better. An appetiser.

You're probably scared. They always are. Tonight, you will dream of me. You may not know it, you may not see me – but I will be there, watching, and you will feel it. Deep down. The prey always knows when its time grows short.

This is the problem; you are so easily led, so quickly taken. All I have to do is plant the idea – a whisper, a shadow, a story. Once they think they will be my next victim, I am summoned. And then I come, from inside their minds. From inside yours now, too.

Are you scared yet? You should be.

The skeleton key, that's me. Unlocking your darkest thoughts and deepest horrors – nightmares are never quite so fun when I'm not there, but when I am... well. You'll have to see, won't you? Blow out your candle, tuck yourself into bed. I'll see you when you sleep.

# The Maths Problem

Aron Khosla

One number after the other,  
Getting bigger by the minute.  
A battle for the biggest,  
Lost by subtraction.

Addition enlarging numbers,  
Decreasing fractions.  
What is its purpose,  
To add or to subtract.

Multiplication increasing many species galore.  
Does the mother identify the young,  
or ignoring the count of them all.

Finally division, the hardest of them all.  
Divide by three,  
Divide by twelve,  
Divide by it all.

Three questions  
Two answers  
One problem

# Trapped by the Blaze

**Elektra Wynn-Evans**

It was the night the fire happened in our block. It was an accident, but it was a fatal mistake. It started with an over-heated oven, but it caught alight and spread, destroying the whole building in an inferno of flames.

There was nothing we could do to stop it.

On the night it happened I was in bed, peaceful, ignorant of what was to come.

Suddenly, the fire alarm rang out through the block, piercingly sharp against the night, waking all its inhabitants with a start. I shot out of bed and raced out onto the corridor. And then saw a sight that froze my blood and formed icicles in my veins. Thick black smoke was billowing down the corridor, clogging my lungs and making me cough and splutter. Through the clouds of smoke, I could see flashes of red light and flames licking the walls and ceiling.

Shouts and screams echoed down the long corridor and then, I realized something awful: my best friend lived down that corridor and was trapped by the blaze. I felt I had to save my friend, but a wall of flames parted us. I shielded my face from the flames with my arm and ran through the searing heat.

The stretch of the blaze was vast but finally I found my friend's apartment and stumbled through the door and into her room. That was where I found her, on the floor, her face streaked with ashes and soot. Her eyes were shut very tightly, and, on first glance, she was not breathing.

I rushed to her and knelt beside her lifeless body and rested her head in my hand as I cradled her in my lap. She wasn't moving but suddenly she gasped a frantic breath and her eyes fluttered open. She was barely conscious, but I was overjoyed to find that I was not too late.

As I was helping her up, I looked around for an exit but, to my horror, there was none: we were surrounded by a wall of flames. All around us the blaze was licking the ceiling. Every second it closed further in on us, getting closer and closer as the smoke billowed around us, hiding my fragile friend from sight.

I tried to call, to scream for help, to anyone left in the flaming building, but nothing came out, and instead smoke poured into my lungs, shortening my life considerably.

And then I knew it was the end. I cleared the air with my arm to catch a last glimpse of my friend. She drew in her last breath into her sooty lungs before finally becoming lifeless in my lap. She was gone. As tears filled my eyes at the thought of my friend and my family, the flames finally closed in and swallowed both of us down, down, down.

# Shadows, Lies and the Twisted Truth

**Chloe Pick**

The Queen walked through her court. The night was lit by lanterns hanging from the crumbling stone arches. Courtiers and servants bowed as she walked past them. Her guards held swords ripped from museums and forged from spray-painted metal. They were those who had been first to respond.

Everyone in that castle had been ready when society had collapsed, when riots broke out in the street. This court was full of executioners, spies and soldiers. And with every scar that they wore as a trophy, they now served their queen. She was the face of their new hopes. She was the new world. And was willing to slaughter anyone who stood in her way.

As she took to her throne, she looked over her court, her army, and realised that they could stab her in the back at any moment. The breath that caught in her throat with that realisation was her sole sign of vulnerability. It cut through deafening silence of that court watching her, waiting for a mistake they could use to climb into a better position.

She was going to rule with a thousand gunshots. She could never trust anyone, could never share her power with anyone. Fear would be her greatest ally. Fear would whisper words of doubt in her people's ears. Fear of what she could be capable of. Fear of the woman in the stories passed around the fire, of the ghost stories late at night. Fear of all that pain she could unleash upon the world. And she would stand strong, fearful of someone seeing through the façade of those lies.

The lies that no one could share the truth of. Where the bodies were hidden. Who had received the bribes.

The queen of shadows, lies and the twisted truth would run the world from the ruins of all she had destroyed. She would lead a world where she was invulnerable.

# Up and Through the Snow

Simran Kaur

I sit by a fire that grows and crackles  
And cracks the ice that grows within  
And melts the frost that grows like shackles  
Upon the window and door.

Then I hear a call,  
A howl on the air,  
Wails and tugs that rise and fall,  
Blows and moans through the door.

I step out upon the snow,  
Untouched it was till now  
And as the wind doth gently blow  
I see something in the woods.

A mist has already settled  
And now covers my eyes  
And floats in the trees nestled  
As the trees moan, leaves dishevelled.

I follow a red fiery thing,  
Up and into the woods  
And as the wind shall now sing  
I shall run through the trees with something inside me burning.

I leave in the snow only my tracks  
That are soon covered thickly yet.  
I jump over cracks  
Carefulness I only lack.

I find what I had long been chasing  
Up and down the woods  
And only a fox stood pacing  
Up upon the snowy casing.

And now I sit a restless soul  
Until I hear a call.

# Drifting Infinitely

Khalid Ali

Come one, come ten nestling in the furry glen.  
Ever drifting, ever near. Never seen by eye or ear.  
Slowly drifting, infinitely, wondering what lies for me.

Slowly rowing, ever coming, never seen, but still in sight.  
Aimlessly rowing, slowly fading.

Memories die as new ones rise waiting for you.  
Never seen, slowly fading, waiting to be found.

Come one, come ten. Never seen in the glen.  
Never found, never seen.

Drifting, infinitely



# Homesick

Sadeen Ahmad

she begged through her eyes,  
her ebony-tinted, beseeching eyes,  
with a silence that spoke a thousand words,  
and a riddle that rattled,  
“I am homesick.”  
but those eyes were not homesick,  
for a hazy, crackling fire,  
or a sickly, slightly bitter hot of cocoa,  
or a scratchy woollen blanket to lie on.  
those murky, wrinkled eyes,  
were homesick for someone.  
and as that silence spoke again,  
with another tale that rattled,  
“If your arms around me are like home,  
then consider me homesick,  
and render yourself a runaway.”

# Greatest Mum

Ealingee Rajeevan

Ever since I was born,  
I was really lucky,  
Since I have a mum,  
Who sincerely loves me.

Whether I was up or down  
Good or bad  
She is always there for me  
Always makes me happy.

She gives me the best gifts  
And throws the best parties  
But the best thing is  
She is always so nice.

She loves me to bits  
And even when she's mad at me  
I know that deep down  
She still loves me.

She's like a friend  
But even more special  
She's my mum  
My mother.

# Everest

Jessica Tomlinson

Everest touched his face. Despite being the same person as he was yesterday, something felt right. He knew what had happened, but it still felt like a dream. His mother must be struggling, she never wanted this for her daughter, but now she doesn't have one.

Everest was nervous, after they had had such a big fight last night.

They gripped their hair, until remembering that it was too short now. It felt right, Everest knew this was right. He worried for his mother, until hearing her shrill call, "Melody, come down here please!"

Everest expected this from his mother yet still felt disappointed. He almost responded, then his brother came in. Everest stared, fearful. Then he dropped some clothes. As he left, Everest looked at the clothes, they were perfect. He put them on and peered into the mirror. They then said,

"Even if I'm not who I'm supposed to be, I like this. I like the real me."

Everest then continued trying on more clothes, excited. He heard someone walking up the stairs, probably his brother again. He shrugged it off. As he heard the shrill ringing of his mother's voice, chills rushed down his spine. He turned away from her, holding back tears.

"Daughter, I only want what's best for you."

Everest couldn't bare to look at her. He knew that she would never understand all of the pain that he had gone through.

They both stood in silence.

Then, with a wavering voice, Everest spoke. "If you want what's best for me, understand you have two sons, not a daughter and a son."

Everest had begun to cry and was clutching onto the baggy jogging bottoms, still trying to hold back tears. His mother tried to reach out and touch his shoulder. Everest batted her hand away and yelled,

"Don't touch me!"

She stared at Everest, hurt by her son's actions. She took a sharp inhale and told Everest,

"Listen son, I love you. I'm sorry if I haven't been to kind since you transitioned. I will respect your decision. It scares me that you can't talk to me about these things."

"Mom, I'm sorry. I was just so scared you'd hate me or not support me. I've dealt with so much transphobia from friends and teachers, I thought you'd be the same."

Everest's face was covered in tears as he stared at his mom.

There was a moments silence where the only noise was Everest's sobs. His mom opened her arms to her son. Everest immediately ran into them.

They hugged for over an hour, just happy to have a mother-child bond once again.

# Forest description

## Nell Blower-Walker

Tuesday 28th February 2023

As the trees brushed against the sunset sky, the forest's colours began to fade. Leaves glided peacefully down onto the rough cobblestone. Twigs snapped vigorously as badgers rushed home to their sett, while yesteryears foxes began the hunt. The path was entwined with crisscrossing undergrowth and thorns that were like needles piercing your skin. The sound of shallow whispers hung in the towering trees above.

The trees had small, fragile branches that twisted and turned, each one displaying a vast amount of autumn's palette. The pine dwelling birds sung and whistled creating a magical atmosphere.

But it was almost too scenic.

An abandoned city stood at the edge of the forest, the sun echoing onto each boulder of rock.

It was deserted.

Decaying, withered branches loomed and searched for answers, while tall, prickly vines encroached the spiralling turrets.

As the wind wandered through the maze-like labyrinth of faceless marble, the ancient oaks creaked in the lonely breeze.

Nightfall was raining down upon the city, as the clouds fell clockwise. The forest was now alive with daunting creatures and meandering roots.

Poppies waved in the wind as a crackling fire danced in the moonlight.

Nothing stirred.

# Common Language

## Sophie Nock

The music is all that connects them.

So many languages: the people setting up tents,  
handing out blankets,

offering beds to spend the night in;  
all quick vowels and flowing consonants.

Then the Red Cross volunteers  
in crisp English, the sounds both long  
and short or somewhere  
in between; some accents thick,  
others barely there at all.

The refugees themselves have a smooth tongue,  
the one most common here.

No-one understands the people they are talking to,  
taking help from, giving aid to.

But the music connects them,  
the way only music can:  
a commonality.

Everyone knows the great composers:  
Mozart, Bach and Beethoven.

Chopin and Debussy.  
Their music blankets the listeners  
in a familiar comfort;  
languages cease to matter  
when it's only the piano they can hear.

# The Cryanchew!

## Athena Castle

Jemima, Jacob and Jamie were ordinary triplets who loved ghosts and were always equipped even though they had never met one in real life. And when I say equipped, I mean that Jamie and Jacob brought spanners, a metal pan and a knife whilst Jemima used her brain and brought ghost and zombie repellent, garlic and a net.

They were really enthusiastic about going to the hills and grabbed their bags and coats and stepped through the crisp autumn air, excitement bubbling through them like lava.

They got to the base of the hills, where they saw a narrow curving pathway leading into darkness! "I wonder what's up there?" whispered a terrified Jemima. "Come on, there can't be anything up there. Just the misty dark path on the hills" said Jamie bossily.

"Yes... but," began Jemima.

"You can go home if you want," Jacob butted in rudely.

"No," Jemima cried.

"Come on then, guys," Jacob said, ushering them on.

Slowly but tentatively they stepped onto the hills, looking around scared but nothing happened. They walked on leaves crunching underfoot. Jacob, Jemima and Jamie stopped to get their torches out, they flicked the switch and orange glow lighted the way ahead and feeling comforted they carried on up the hills.

Shining the torch on the ground Jemima let out a squeak of surprise and stopped dead still.

"What we thought were leaves and twigs," she said, looking up to meet the boys' eyes, "are actually BONES!"

"What!" cried Jamie and Jacob, shining their torches on the ground.

Sure enough there were new and old bones shining pale and deathly in the moonlight. Scared, they ran up the hill, their torches bobbing up and down. They reached the top, panting and out of breath, clutching their sides.

A faint scream came from somewhere,

"What was that?" Jacob said, sharply looking around.

"There it goes again," said Jemima and Jamie, straining their ears although this time it was loud and clear.

"Arghhhhh!" shouted the children, turning a corner and stopping abruptly as there blocking the path was a monster! It was tall with spider legs and pig/hogs bottom, with a lions face! It was feasting on human flesh and blood but leaving the bones.

They crept away and got their weapons out, leaving their bags behind them. When they rounded the corner again, the monster had finished its meal and turned to look at the children.

"It's a CRYANCHEW!" screamed Jemima.

She then picked up some bones and covered it all in fake blood and moss, then tied it onto a piece of string. She threw it to the Cryanchew who tilted its head to a side and started chewing it — but Jemima had stuffed it with garlic which Cryanchews are allergic to! The monster ate it, got sick and died.

So that's the end of the Cryanchew, J&J&J flopped to the ground and fell asleep. When they woke up they were back in their beds and wondered if it had all been a dream.

# A Soul-Sucking Adventure

Ealingee Rajeevan

You and me, were once great mates on a pirate ship,  
Searching for treasure,  
Solving uncovered mysteries  
and crushing shipwrecks.

Till that one stormy, foggy day of tornados,  
We were great mates on a pirate ship.

We sailed to many lands of myths and gold,  
where treasure was poisonous,  
or where treasure was completely fatal.  
We were great mates on a pirate ship  
Until that one stormy, foggy day of tornados,  
came to our rich, worthy ship.

That one soul-sucking day came  
Along the shore, the tornado came,  
which travelled into the middle of the,  
vibrating, stormy ocean.

Our ship cracked and shook aggressively,  
as we looked down to see mountainous,  
water spouts down below us.  
We climbed,  
and crawled down,  
but even after all that effort,  
we just got swooped into the massive water spout.

# The Friendly Fox

Maya Sharif

“Tap, tap, tap,” knocked the rain persistently at the cold, wet window trying to wake May-Robin from her lazy, long slumber. She rubbed her sleepy eyes and looked out of the foggy window. “Ugh!” she sighed. “Another miserable, rainy day!” With that, she stomped down the stairs to the kitchen like a lazy, moody elephant that had not had his morning coffee.

Suddenly, there was a knock at the door. May-Robin opened it and there stood a fox with golden fur and mysterious, blue eyes. He trotted straight towards her, his mouth wide-open and, May-Robin, convinced that he was going to eat her, screamed like a siren, but instead the fox licked her, giggling and howling loudly. May-Robin gasped, her mouth wide open. “I can understand you!” she exclaimed. “Nice to meet you, Ginger. I’m May-Robin.”

That evening on the news, a reporter announced, “The pollution in UNS Spailand is harming and killing our animals.” May-Robin started thinking long and hard about what she could do to help to help her new friend, Ginger.

By the next morning, she was staring up at a beautiful, colossal building that loomed over her like a giant’s shadow.

She stepped inside ready to stand up to the government. “Excuse me, sirs, I would like to speak to someone in the government,” she announced confidently even though she was shaking inside like a wobbly jelly.

“We don’t have time for young children,” shouted the guards at the door as they spun her around and pushed her out of the building.

“Hmm,” thought May-Robin.

That afternoon, May-Robin came back. When the guards saw her arrive, they took one look at her and immediately let her in...

She marched into the President’s office with a pleased grin on her face. Sitting with the rest of his senators, he shrugged his shoulders and put his head back down when May-Robin walked in.

Then, Ginger walked in...

The President lifted his head and looked back down. Ginger’s furry friend, Loma, the panther, walked in. Now the President put his pen down. Grizzly, the bear, stomped in a few seconds after, along with his whole bear family. Suddenly, the President sat straight up, with wide eyes, ready to listen.

“Good morning, everybody. You have heard that pollution is harming our nature and I want to stop that,” May-Robin said loudly in a very determined manner.

Suddenly, Ginger trotted up to the President and gave him a sloppy lick. May-Robin giggled and then everybody was laughing. "Yes, we will help the animals," announced one of the senators after a quiet chat with the President.

That evening, it was announced that if anybody in UNS Spailand didn't throw their rubbish away, they would be jailed because when we litter, animals die and that is a type of murder. The animals were safe and it was all thanks to May-Robin, a friendly fox, a cheeky panther, a grizzly bear and his family.

## If the world was...

**Natalia Kosiorek**

If the world was...

If the sky was pink,  
And in pens there was no ink,  
Whilst grass was all orange,  
And if children could quickly gain all the knowledge,  
Floating in the sky there could be clouds that are green.

Or if children were never mean,  
How wonderful the world is if that just lasted a few seconds.

And if people were as fast as leopards,  
If fish could walk,  
Or even talk,  
And cats loved water,  
And winters were a bit warmer,

And I love this world so much.

# The Legend of the Four Elements

## Amber Wallbutton

“Are you listening Pinto? You asked for a bedtime story and I will only say it once,” Topaz told his younger brother softly.

“Okay. I’m coming now,” replied Pinto. “Also, Mum says you need to brush my mane and tail.”

“Alright. I’ll do that while I tell the story. Okay, once upon a time there were four elements: Earth, Water, Wind and Fire. These conspicuous elements were both miraculous and powerful. The four elements took the form of horses like us and roamed the deepest woods and highest peaks. They worshiped Equestria our God and carried a prophesy. Wandering across snow and sand they found the place they longed for, evil Luna’s grave, a powerful sorceress.

“The prophesy foretold that the elements would combine their magic to open a portal, summoning the sorceress from her banishment beyond. But it would be an ordinary horse that would ultimately defeat her.

“That ordinary horse was your Grandfather Alpha. As foretold, Gust the Wind horse, Aqua the water horse, Earth the Life horse and Flare the Fire horse enlisted their power to create this mystic gateway. Luna burst forth from the darkness within and struck a piercing glare at the four, galloping off into the night. She had escaped, and the four elements had been reduced to mere glowing orbs.

“Grandfather Alpha was the first horse to stumble across these floating orbs. Suddenly, he heard a voice like an angel. Equestria instructed Grandfather to combine the lifeless, pulsing flares, reinstate the elements and tell them that Luna was to be overcome. So he did that very thing. After a matter of seconds, all four horses were gathered around Grandfather, listening to his every word.

“‘We can lure Luna here with our magic but you must be the one to make the final move,’ Gust said.

“Many hours passed until finally Luna became a speck on the horizon, rapidly approaching. Grandfather Alpha gathered all his courage and charged bravely towards her, hooves thrashing. One fated blow collided with the source of all her power, a glittering black twisted horn positioned in the centre of her forehead.

“For a few moments, Luna looked around in horror before slowly fading into the night.

“He was a true hero and we wouldn’t be here if he hadn’t risked his life.” Topaz finished.

“Did Grandfather know the four horses?” Pinto asked wiping his muzzle.

“Bed for you now, Pinto darling. Sleep is important and so is not scaring your younger brother with fairy tales before dusk,” called Mother.

“Don’t worry. I will tell you tomorrow,” Topaz whispered, and with that he flicked off the light switch and trotted out onto the landing.

# Spark

## Young Writers

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