

THE ALPINE PATH

Volume 9, June 2025

From the Editor

We feel beyond blessed to be sending out Volume 9 of The Alpine Path. It is a testament to the never-ending creativity of the kids in our homeschool community.

This issue of The Alpine Path invites you to take a moment to appreciate the sky, revisit beloved characters from literature, and find hope in the change that comes with the passage of time. The passions and interests of the authors and artists represented in these pages are presented through poems, short stories, and artwork.

Thank you for continuing to support this literary journal! Feel free to share the pieces that piqued your interest with your friends and family. We look forward to seeing the works of art that your children create for Volume 10!

The Stars Have Been Friends to Me

Cole Richards, 17

The stars have been friends to me
In times of trouble and pain,
Lonely nights when I strove to see
Through the suffering to the gain.

The stars were there when I forgot my worth,
And helped me learn to see,
Whatever may happen here on this earth,
There's always eternity.

And, when in desperate times, I whispered
A hopeful verse or line,
The stars echoed the hallowed words,
And made them more wholly mine.

The stars have been friends to me
In times of joy as well as grief,
Windows to Heaven I view gratefully
In remembrance of relief.

I know not to fear solitude,
For the stars have been friends to me. 🏔️



A Farewell at Life's Beginning

Cole Richards, 17

I wish you joy, and only a little pain,
On the road you chose to walk.
It seems that life's your treasure chest,
Standing ready for you to unlock.

May you take all the wonders your bright future holds,
And find yourself satisfied,
Yet keep reaching for more, and never back down,
However you find yourself tried.

My dreams always seemed small, compared with yours,
Quiet and simple (though sweet)
While you stand tall on the shoulders of giants,
I'm content to sit at their feet.

But I'll still be here, watching you,
Proud and amazed at the great things you do.

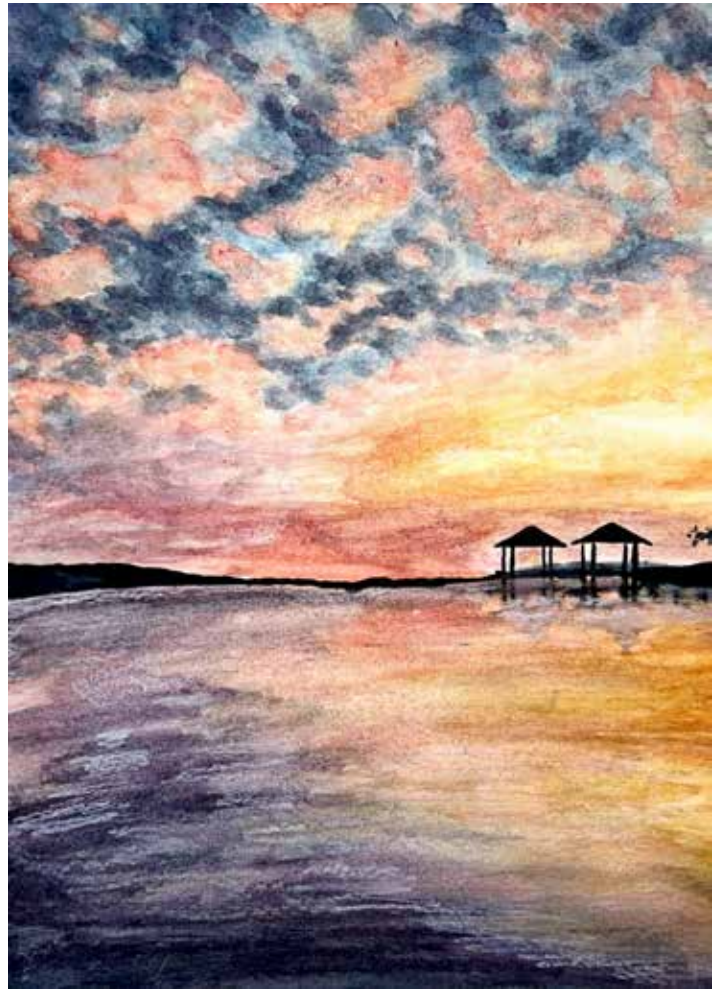
And though I may seem left behind,
Don't feel sorry for me.
It is this way because of who I am,
And who I chose to be.

I'm grateful to have known you,
Through the laughter and the tears.
You've been a friend worth having,
And these have surely been fruitful years.

So as you continue on through life,
And fulfill your destiny,
Please look back, every now and then,
And spare a thought for me.
For I have stayed back, too frightened to follow
To the glorious places you'll be. 🏔️



Kate Mulner, 14



Meg Richards, 15

Clouds

Nathan Mulner, 16

The clouds sail above us now,
With carefree bliss they observe the ground.

Troubles they do not feel;
But to those who watch, a movie-reel:

Of childhood, of age,
Of joy, of pain,
Of laughter, of tears,
Of hopes and fears.

We build things up, and we tear things down,
Forgetting the past and future written in the clouds. 🏔️

Far Worse

Brynlee Boline, 15

It was the final battle. Smoke choked the air. Two ships had already been sunk. Sunlight shimmered across the ocean's surface. The Evil One's reign of terror was ending. No more murders. No more raids. People would soon sleep soundly in their beds. No longer haunted by fear of the Evil One and his crew.

Two of his ships had been destroyed; another captured. Now, the Evil One knelt on the deck of his last remaining vessel, a sword at his throat. On the other end of that blade stood the Chosen One—Evangeline.

She didn't look like a warrior. Nineteen years old, with chin-length wavy blonde hair and striking blue eyes, she was as pretty as she was deadly. She wore a flowing dress cinched with a belt that also held the scabbard for her sword—Evangeline had always liked both beauty and blades.

No one could quite recall why she had become the Chosen One. The stories had faded, the truth lost to time and retelling—but all agreed she was destined for this moment.

After so many years, the moment was finally here. Evangeline was

about to strike down the monster who had caused so much pain.

As she raised her sword, the Evil One met her gaze. "If you kill me," he said, "You'll be no better than I am."

Her eyes gleamed. A cold laugh slipped from her lips. "Oh, believe me," she whispered. "I plan to be far worse."

With that, she brought the sword down.

Liam, her twin brother, watched in horror as his best friend claimed the Evil One's life, and with it, his legacy—becoming the most feared and merciless force at sea. 🏔️

The 5k

Nathan Mulner, 16

Here I go...
Here I start,
Sprinting faster than a dart.

See ya, tree!
See ya, rock!
Watch me, 'cause I'll never stop!

I'm faster than sound,
I'm speedier than light,
I'm (huff) fine, I'm (gasp) alright!

I'm goin' slower,
I'm getting' tired,
My poor, weak legs are on FIRE

OH THE PAIN
OH I'M QUEASY

Wait, we're done? That was easy! 🏔️



Kamehameha by Luke Choi, 8

Ophelia

Inspiration derived from William Shakespeare's Hamlet

Lydia Hennesy, 17

Beautiful maiden, heart broken.
Lying in a ditch, eyes wide open.
Death steals o'er her quietly,
Swaddling garments of finery.
A fairy princess she appears;
A lovelorn pixie drowned in tears.
In life, she was most cruelly berated
Now ethereal face is sorrow-tainted.
Her features frozen in dismay,
Remaining till her body's decay,
Flowers scatter round her figure,
Colors bright—in sun they glitter.
Singing, singing languid in the water
Angel insensible; lamb at the slaughter.
Thoughts turned to her maddened love—
He'd wrung the heart of this gentle dove.
Slowly, slowly the mermaid sank
Her death we can to her lover thank.
The gossamer lady breathed her last sigh,
Succumbed to close her eyes and die. 🏔️



Savannah Mulner, 11



Chichi by Liliana Choi, 10

Brief Respite

Cole Richards, 17

I stand among the clouds and stars.
To me they seem to say,
“Be still with us, for night is ours.”
But then comes day. 🏔️

The Moon

Marlena, 12

Moon
Pale, Still,
High in the dark quiet sky.
Watching me and the stars twirl slowly by.
Silent Drifter. 🏔️

Elemental Gestures

Addie Collins, 16

“Hush!” whispered the wind, “Hearken to my sound,
See what noise I’m making rustling leaves around!”
“Quiet,” gurgled the river, “Follow my crystal falls,
Find my hidden stones, listen to my voice that draws.”
“Look,” exclaimed the earth, “What beauty resides in me,
Observe my wonderful creations; birds, flowers, and trees.”
“Watch,” crackled the fire, “Though danger lurks close by,
As long as I am fed, I shall ne’er die.” 🏔️



Meg Richards, 15

Miss Havisham

Inspiration derived from Charles Dickens's Great Expectations

Lydia Hennesy, 17

The house was crumbling,
And she sat mumbling—
Sequestered from the world
In a dank room, she was curled.
Ghastly pale dress—tattered, worn
Framed sallow figure—moth-eaten,
torn.
The clock on the wall,
Hadn't moved at all.
Since that cursed day
Sorrow came to play.
She had dressed with smile wide
In expectation, waited to become
a bride.
But in single moment, her dreams
crashed;
Her life stood still, as if encased by
glass.
Her rotting nunnery was torturous
reminder,
That time had withered—the past
behind her.
But she ignored the room's
physical forsake,
And disregarded the stench of her
moldering wedding cake.
With each day, her humanity
steadily waned.
Till she was rendered to a waif,
because of her pain. 🏔️

Cathy

Inspiration derived from Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights

Lydia Hennesy, 17

Wild fields of rotting roses
Flushed-face girl in dirtied hoses.
With her playmate by her side,
Nothing, it seemed, could go awry.
Then one day, the savage wench,
Was claimed by a refining twitch,
Which, dear Heathcliff did detest—
Her mannerisms gave much unrest.
Broken-hearted, tender lad,
I'm afraid to say, went very mad.
But she was stuck in the middle—
Between her desires and what was civil.
Playmate, sweetheart, and soul mate
She rejected before it was too late—
To change her mind, and seal her fate
Condemning herself to poverty's weight.
But her stifled passion would not die,
However much she would work and try.
In ironic display of cruelty she'd inflicted,
Her mind turned feverish and afflicted.
Brains burning, to death she would come—
Name of playmate branded on tongue. 🏔️

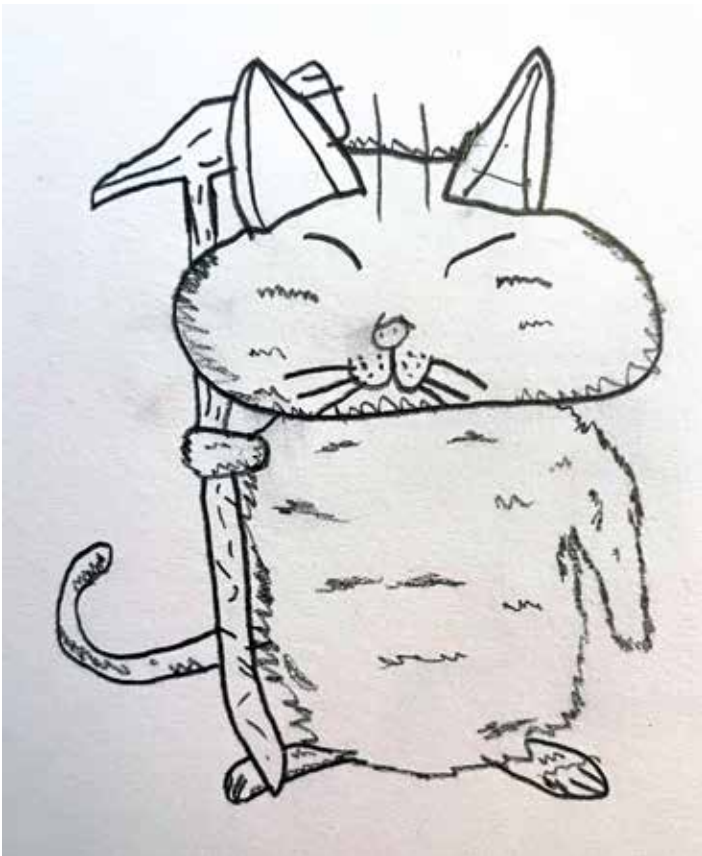


Belted Kingfisher by Emery Nash, 9

The Grandfather Clock

Chesney M., 15

Through days and nights both long and short,
I tick and I tock.
Generations come and generations go,
Still I go on, strong as a rock.
I have seen it all,
The best and the worst.
And among the great storytellers,
I'm one of the first.
From my perch in the parlor,
I have seen the changing world.
I've seen disastrous tragedies,
And great plans unfurled.
I have seen the young and innocent,
Stray from the righteous path.
I've seen the true and humble,
Suffer the cruel one's wrath.
I have seen the standards lower,
And morals thrown out to decay.
The sun groans a little louder,
Before rising each new day.
Learn from my wisdom,
Be different; be true.
Be the first in a movement,
It can start with you!
From all my years of watching,
One thing I have learned:
Time will go on,
But change has to be earned. 🏔️



Kurrin by Luke Choi, 8

Rumpelstiltskin

Brynlee Boline, 15

Whenever anybody tells my story, they think I'm the villain. I'm the one to blame. But that's not true. I only did what I had to do.

I come from a long line of Wish Granters. When I was still young, around 100 years of age, I got to join the family business. Now, before I go any further, let me explain exactly what it is I do, since people nowadays don't ever seem to know.

Only goblins can be Wish Granters, with the primary job of granting wishes, though you may hear versions that say elves or dwarves can be too. And no, we are not the green and warty creatures you would typically think of when you hear goblin. In fact, we look quite like the normal human. The only difference is, besides the fact that we are magical, we are on the shorter side and have uniquely colored eyes. Mine are purple.

When one is in despair, a Wish Granter will immediately be summoned to them, as long as their need is great enough. Don't ask me how that is determined, or why the chosen goblin is chosen for the specific job; nobody knows. When we are summoned, we will allow the one in need to make a wish. But we always need something in return. Those are the rules. You cannot grant a wish if the wisher is unable to pay. Then we grant the wish and leave. If someone, at some other point in their life, needs to make a second wish, the same goblin will be summoned, as they know how to deal with the human if something gets out of hand. It's as simple as that.

Now that you know what I do, let me continue with the true story.

When I was only 100 years old, I was at my first shift as a Wish Granter. I was sitting in the lobby at headquarters with a few others waiting to be summoned, when I suddenly appeared standing outside a door with a quiet pop. At first I was startled, but I quickly became excited. It was my first real job after all!

From the other side of the door, I heard the soft sound of weeping. That had to be the reason I was summoned here. I tried the door, but it was locked.

No matter. My training had prepared me for all situations.

With a simple snap of my fingers, the door was unlocked. A handy little trick that I had practiced many times. I walked into the room, curious at all the straw piled along the walls. The young girl in the corner lifted her head from her hands. She gasped when she laid her eyes on me.

I put on my best smile. "Hello. Why are you weeping? Is something wrong?"

She hesitated for a moment before bursting out, "Yes! The King had demanded I spin this straw into gold, or he will kill me. But I know not how!" Her head dropped back into her hands.

"I can do it for you," I said, eager to finish my first mission. "But what will you give me in return?"

She looked down at herself. "I can give you my necklace."

I accepted the payment before sitting down and spinning all the straw into gold. It wasn't long before the task was complete. I nodded to the girl and snapped my fingers, returning to headquarters.

The next night started out nearly the same. I was summoned to a door, which was similar to the last, though not the same. After I unlocked the door, I entered, surprised to find the same girl from the previous night sitting there, surrounded by straw.

When she saw me, her eyes widened for a second before she rushed to my side, pleading with her eyes. "Oh, please help me! When the King saw all the gold you made yesterday, he was pleased, and I thought for certain he would let me go. But no, he is greedy and instead put me in this room, which is even bigger, and demanded I do it again!"

"Very well. But what will you give me in return?"

The girl must have already thought about this, because she immediately said, "My ring." I accepted it.

It took longer this time, but I finished well before morning and returned to headquarters once again.

The same thing as the previous two nights happened the third night, though I entered to find the biggest room yet, at least twice the size of the last.

"Oh, thank you for coming," the girl said. "This will be the last night, for the King told me if I did all this straw, I would become his queen and would not have to do it any longer. But," she hesitated. "I'm afraid I have nothing left to give you."

This made me nervous, for I was determined to complete my task. I couldn't return empty handed either, or I would receive my first

strike. Three and I would be fired. And I didn't even know if the wish would work without payment. That, and I had started to truly start feeling sympathetic for this girl and her cause.

So after thinking long and hard, I said, "Then say you will give me the first child you have when you become queen."

Seeing no other option, she agreed. I barely finished spinning the straw before dawn, for the room was so large. I returned home, hoping I could find a solution before the girl had a child.

Nearly a year went by, and by that time, I had nearly forgotten the first deal I made and what I would have to do. Until one night, I was sent to the castle once again, appearing in front of the now queen. I was confused at first, for she looked quite happy and not at all in need of a wish. But then I saw the tiny baby in her arms and I remembered.

When she saw me, she was horrified. "Please, no. Don't take my baby. I'll do anything! What do you want?" Her voice was laced with desperation. "I can give you everything in the kingdom! Whatever you want. Just don't take my baby!" Tears streamed down her face.

But I knew it wouldn't work. The deal had been made and the price had to be the child. That couldn't be changed. But I did not want to take the small thing from its mother.

In a soft voice, I said, "I will give you three days, and if during that time you tell me my name, you shall keep your child."

I returned the next day and she said all the names she could think of. Names like Timothy, Ichabod, Benjamin, and Jeremiah. But none were my name.

The second day she said comical names such as, Bandy-Legs, Hunchback, and Crookshanks. I was offended by most of them, but to all I said, "That is not my name, ma'am."

Now I knew the Queen would never guess my name, and I really didn't want to have to take her child. So that night, I headed to a local tavern I knew a few of her guards enjoyed visiting. When I was sure they were listening, I announced to the entire room what my name truly was, knowing they would

immediately go and tell their queen.

And so the next day, I asked her my name.

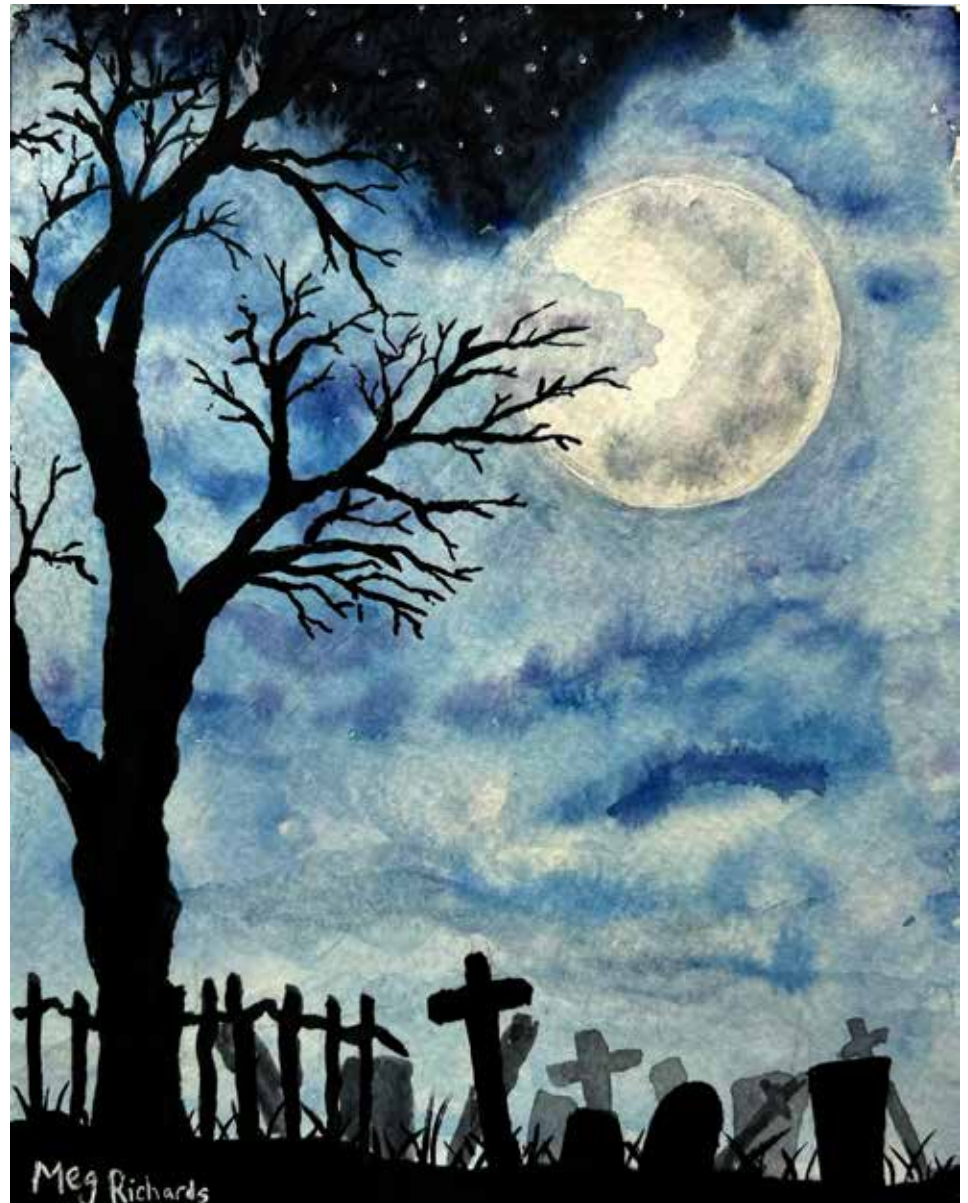
"John? Jemmy? Tom?" she guessed.

I replied no to each of them.

"Could it be Rumpelstiltskin?"

I nodded, for she was correct, and went back home, grateful the woman could stay with her child.

So there you have it. I'm not the villain. 🏰



Meg Richards, 15

Dawning Hope

Rose Richards, 12

Lonely, alone, devastated, lost.
I see only shadows around me,
Nothing to see for miles around
But a black bird and a bare tree.

No one is here, no one is there
No one or anything anywhere.
No one to talk to,
And nothing to look at
But a bird and a tree that is bare.

When will I see the light in the distance
So long ago you told me of?
When will a hand reach out to guide me
With the gentle but strong grasp of love?

Long I have waited for the sun to rise
And this darkness pass o'er my brow,
Long have I waited for life giving water
To come and cause new things to grow!

With hope in my heart,
And a prayer in my soul
I wait for the blessed day;
The day when my darkness and sorrows will cease,
And my Savior shall take me away. 🏔️



Flowers by Brynlee, 15



The Mystery of the Cherry Blossom by Liliana Choi, 10

Wonder

Addie Collins, 16

I wonder what would happen
If the ocean's water ran out.

I wonder what would happen
If all the mountains fell down.

I wonder what would happen
If magic were actually real.

I wonder what would happen
If we couldn't even feel.

I wonder what would happen
If every sentence was the truth.

I wonder what would happen
If all the ink in pens were used.

I wonder what would happen
If the sun was really cold.

I wonder what would happen
If no one ever grew old.

I wonder what would happen
If the sky wasn't blue.

I wonder what would happen
If I told you that I loved you. 🏔️