

A WORLD WITHOUT TREES

A Story Studio Anthology by Young Authors (aged 5-13)



Story Studio is a charity that **inspires**, **educates** and **empowers** youth to be great storytellers.

We create innovative, 'fun-first' workshops that develop narrative capacity in youth, and celebrate young writers by crafting beautiful publications from their words.

This anthology is composed of stories written by children and youth across Canada, between the ages of 5 and 13 as a result of our September 2024 creative writing contest.

We asked young authors to write about what life would be like without trees. We looked for forward-thinking tales that captivated readers with dynamic plots, compelling characters, and immersive settings.



THIS MONTH'S WINNERS

- **Ages 10-13 1st Place:** The Seeds by Xuyuan (age 11)
- **Ages 10-13 2nd Place:** Fletchmen Forestry by Oliver (age 13)

Table of Contents

The Lost City of Zee	7
The Guardian Tree	10
The Magic Ring	12
Diver 408	14
Fletchmen Forestry	16
The Tree Quest	19
The Seeds	21
The Darklings' Prophecy	23

The Lost City of Zee

By Aubrey, age 11

We were all so glad to be here.

Let me explain.

A few weeks ago my family's little cottage and all the trees in the town of Dallenburgh got blown down after a tornado came by. It was very hard to breathe normally and we had no place to stay. So some of our village people decided to leave the town and look for new places to stay together.

We travelled through hills and valleys, through miniature ponds and lakes, and across a short deserted land. The more we walked, the more we started to see more trees. That gave us motivation to keep moving.

So, here we are, in the present, all thirty-six of us, gazing at the large, pine green bulletin board that marked: *Welcome to the Lost City of Zee.*

"This is it, guys!" I said, excitedly.

"Oh not so quick," came a voice. I glanced up to see a large willow tree on top of me. Yup, I'm just as surprised as you are. "To pass, answer my two riddles, and a test. Select one person and hope for your destiny."

"Hey, I think you should go. You're the only one who's capable." A little boy from the group said. Some people gave a silent glare at him, but quickly smiled back at me. I smiled.

"That would be me," I said, after discussing it for a while.

"Ooh, we have a small contestant this year, but let me warn you, not a lot of them got through this test. No turning back."

"Let's get this over with," I said.

Magically, the willow tree's branches gestured to a small pond with lots of rocks. I walked toward a large boulder and sat down.

"The first question," the willow tree said, "What's something that has a bark but does not bite?"

Hmm, I pondered. "Trees?"

"Wow, yes!" The tree replied. "I'm tall when I'm young, short when I'm old. What am I?"

'*Hmm*,' I thought. "Still... trees?"

"Yes! And finally, the hardest. It's a bit of a hunt. You will need to use this map to find the hidden treasure, but there is a big obstacle waiting for you," the tree said. I nodded.

The willow tree then gave a magical blow of wind with its leaves and a door behind it opened. Inside, it was like the most beautiful fairy tale world you'd ever dreamt of. Then, I took the risk. I was handed the map, and it included many confusing and baffling directions.

"Go to Mermaid Lagoon," I read off the map. I began walking there, and that's when I met my obstacle. There, in front of my eyes, was a large hideous sea monster with dull green scales sleeping soundly in a lake.

"Help!" came a voice. "The sea monster is taking over our home, and we have no place to stay." It was a little mermaid, and when I looked up, there were a whole family of mermaids.

Thinking quickly, I picked up a nearby pebble and threw it at the monster at such an accurate angle that shook it from its sleep! He looked furiously at his surroundings. The mermaids started to shriek. The sea monster started to plod towards me. With a loud whoop, the mermaids turned to see me walloping at the monster with my jacket. After a long period of fighting, he finally fainted.

"You did it!" The mermaids cheered in unison.

"Save the ovation for later, I gotta go," I said, tying my jacket back onto my waist.

A few moments later..

"The treasure must be somewhere here... AH!" I said. There was a gigantic wooden chest buried behind some bushes and twigs.

'I bet it's going to be filled with jewels and gold!' I thought. To my surprise, a single card was left in the chest. It read: CONGRATULATIONS! TURN BACK AND BRING THIS CARD TO ME FOR VERIFICATION.

'No jewels? That must be wrong,' I thought, but followed the instructions anyway.

Back at the door where everyone was panicking for my return, they gave a loud cheer as soon as they saw me.

"WOW! You did it!" The willow tree exclaimed, surprised. "Well, rules are rules, enjoy your stay!"

So that's how we ended our journey, happy to live and breathe easily again.

The End.

The Guardian Tree

By Ivyanne, age 11

In a faraway galaxy was a planet called Earth 2.0. It contained oxygen, water, animals, and humans who had enhanced powers. Some could fly, or turn invisible, and things just varied from there. It was made of three continents; The Sapiens Republic, Hippopotamus Realm, and Buffalo Stampede Eden.

There was one problem - all the trees disappeared, due to a virus. Without trees, the world was barren and ugly, so people had been investigating ways to restore the beauty. It was pretty much impossible until a girl called Barb was identified with an ability that no one had seen before, the ability to grow trees.

Barb knew she was the only one who could restore her world, but her powers weren't strong enough. After some careful research, she realized that she could enhance her powers by going to the Guardian Tree.

Barb located a map and sketched her route. She'd cut through Buffalo Stampede Eden, to get to the forest that contained the guardian's tree. Barb set off on her journey riding her little red motorbike. After traveling thirty miles, Barb finally left the Sapiens Republic.

After traveling for another few hours, Barb arrived at the ocean. That was the one aspect Barb forgot to consider. How was she going to travel past the water? Just then, there was a gigantic wave that blew to shore. Barb was alarmed, but when she looked again, the wave seemed to have formed a pathway in the ocean. She traveled across the ocean and straight to the Buffalo Stampede Eden prairie. Things weren't going the way that Barb planned, but in a positive way!

Barb arrived at the prairie, but a buffalo stampede was about to come through! She had to find a way to cross without getting trampled. Barb thought of a plan. She saw the head buffalo incoming, so with a swift motion, she grabbed its neck and climbed on. Barb quickly grabbed the rope that she had brought and tied it around the buffalo's neck, steering the buffalo in the direction that she wanted.

She steered the buffalo and the stampede into the forest. Riding a buffalo was faster than riding a motorbike, so they got to the Guardian Tree faster. Once there, Barb abandoned the buffalo. Suddenly, a deep, echoing voice blasted into her ears. "Welcome to the Guardian Tree, Barb. We have been waiting for you. You have traveled the world and gotten to your final destination. You are now a Guardian of the Guardian tree, and you must guard this place with your life. We will enhance your power, and you can restore the world."

With that, Barb floated upwards and was surrounded with a gale. Barb could feel the power soaking into her and when she had enhanced her powers to her limit, she landed on the ground. Then, Barb stomped her foot, and many sprouts appeared on the ground and everywhere on the planet. Barb's journey was complete, and she restored the planet's beauty!

The End.

The Magic Ring

By Malak, age 11

Wanda had a weird dream, she dreamed that she had a magic ring that could grant her anything she wished. She then suddenly woke up and turned around to look at her nightstand. And when she did so she saw the same ring that she saw in her dream. The moment she saw it, she picked it up and started wishing for something she's wanted for a long time. She said, "I want a puppy!" Suddenly a puppy appeared in her hands.

She instantly rushed downstairs to show her mom the ring and the puppy that appeared in her hands. "Mom, mom! Look at this! I can wish for whatever I want with this ring. I am going to be queen of all the queens!"

Her mom noticed that she was being too greedy so she told her daughter to be careful of what she wished for. Even though her mother was right, Wanda still disobeyed her mom and continued making unnecessary wishes that she soon regretted.

She first realized she didn't have breakfast, so first she wished herself a breakfast so fine that even the queen of England couldn't imagine it. But Wanda didn't stop at the breakfast, after eating the breakfast she wished to be the richest in all the land, she wished to live in a palace, she wished for all schools in the world to be demolished. And even after all that wishing she still wasn't happy with what she had. She then wished for all the riches in the land and left everyone penniless.

Her mother was one of the people who became penniless because of Wanda, so she then attempted to reach Wanda at the top of the palace, something no one dared to do, to try to make Wanda happy again and to stop all this madness. After all she is her mother and mothers are supposed to make sure no harm comes to their children and ensure their children are always happy. After a very tiring ascend, her mother finally made it to the very top of the palace and found Wanda.

“Why would you do such a thing? I thought I was a good mother and I thought I taught you well,” Wanda’s mother said. Instantly Wanda’s mother took the ring from Wanda’s finger and wished, “I wish everything would go back to normal.”

Just then, Wanda’s eyes fluttered open and she realized that it was all just a dream. She grabbed her pillow and sobbed through it until it was soaking wet and said, “I can’t believe I would do such a thing.”



The End.

Diver 408

By Nolan, age 13



One, two, one, two. Then again, one, two. Evan brought in another gulp of purified air through his oxygen amplifier mask. Gradually, his relentless heartbeat regulated. Still, he felt the profound suffocating sadness of another loss. As he stood by the endless amounts of graves, he gave himself a refresher. It's 2457, and the population has declined again, this time to 408. Tears rolled down his eyes as he thought of this. He looked into the blank horizon and added: there are no trees.

Evan slowly walked away from the tombs and returned to his obligation, as a Diver. He was one of the few selected for the job.

According to the stories it had all happened on July 4th 2037, the day when the trees were caught with an abnormal flu. By 2045 every single tree had died out.

Finally, Evan arrived at his diving spot. He looked into the murky and contaminated water in the sweltering sun, and put on his swimsuit. Then, he dove straight into the water.

As he pushed himself downward, he made another refresher in his mind. After the trees died out floods in particular became much more severe, which resulted in 300 meters of earth to be submerged. That incident had cut down 64% of earth's population back then.

Evan's job as a Diver was to recover the relics and artifacts that had been submerged. Soon, Evan reached the midpoint, and could vaguely see artifacts floating around. Sadly, without proper oxygen tanks no human being had been able to descend to the very bottom where the cities were.

He had blindly swung his arms around in hopes of obtaining something, when he saw it. A shiny object jammed within a pipe. As he swam closer, he was able to depict that the pipe had been stuck between two cracks in a seamount and then, most spectacularly, he finally realized what it was. A book. An actual paper book. He swam toward it, and when he got there, he had to stuff his right hand through the constrictive pipe hole to reach for the book. When he finally felt it in his grasp, he soon discovered that his lingering fear of something going wrong was right, his arm was completely stuck in the pipe.

Desperately, he tried yanking his arm out, only to feel great pain as his arm grazed the rusted metal of the inside of the pipe. He yanked his arm seven consecutive times and was finally able to free it—his hand still holding the book.

His mini-oxygen tank had decreased to 20%, as he opened the book, and to his surprise a packet came floating out, a seed packet! He snatched it and read the label: *Douglas Fir Seeds*, and let it float to the surface. He knew he would never make it to the surface, but the packet would. Humanity had hope, and as his eyes slowly closed, he smiled, he had fulfilled his purpose, as a Diver.

The End.

Fletchmen Forestry

By Oliver, age 13

Assistant Maxson of Fletchman Forestry Company was still dressed in an official-looking ebony suit as he rapped his knuckles against a door. A rather large engraved plaque on the wall to the right read *'Astin Fletchman: Owner, CEO.'*

"Yeah, come in, what d'you want?" a rough voice materialized from behind the solid wood. Maxson gently eased open the door and was met with the droning of electric fans. A satisfyingly cool breeze wafted over him. It was a nice break from the suffocating heat that enveloped the rest of the building. Heat was a huge problem, due to the fact that company headquarters were located in the barren desert that covered the majority of North America, and because the owner wasn't willing to spend a miniscule fraction of his billions of dollars on his employees' comfort. Maxson stepped into the office and took a seat in the wobbly plastic seat which stood across the desk from Mr. Fletchman's luxurious armchair. The bulky, bearded man sitting in the armchair was surrounded by four electric fans, one on each side. He barked, "Oh, it's you."

Maxson took a deep breath. "It worked. We did it."

"Great!" Mr. Fletchman pumped his fist. "But why do you look so unhappy? This means more money for you as well as me."

The assistant remained silent. He was surprised the man across from him had noticed his glum expression.

Mr. Fletchman withdrew a wad of hundred dollar bills from the front pocket of his lightweight collared shirt. "I always keep some cash with me just to remind myself how good it feels," he explained, handing a bill to Maxson. "See? Don't you love the feeling of money in your hand? This is what we do everything for. This is the end goal. They say money can't buy happiness. Let me put it simply: they're wrong. It doesn't matter what we do to get it. I don't care if we have to blackmail. It's all about the money. You don't understand."

'You are the one who does not understand,' Maxson thought grimly.

"You can go now, if that is all you wanted to tell me," Mr. Fletchman said.

"This is the last forest in the world, and we are going to cut it down," Maxson blurted.

"Yeah, that's right." The billionaire smiled.

"But the world will be destroyed! There won't be enough oxygen in the atmosphere to sustain fifteen billion people! And all the animals! Thousands of species will go extinct!"

"Maxson, calm down, there's a second part to my plan. After all the trees are gone, everybody will be looking for a way to get oxygen. And there is a solution. My recently patented Fletchman brand oxygen filtration machine."

"No."

"Yes! I'll build factories all over the world and become the richest man in history!" Mr. Fletchman was now grinning.

'This is my fault,' Maxson thought, *'I need to stop this from happening.'* He abruptly rose from his seat and turned toward the door.

"Wait!" Mr. Fletchman shrieked. Maxson glanced at him. "That hundred dollar bill isn't yours to keep."

Maxson crumpled the bill in his fist and threw it back at his boss. Mr. Fletchman unraveled it delicately and added it back to his wad. The assistant stormed out the door, his crisp suit now rumpled from the fans.

Maxson arrived at the parking lot a few minutes later, practically running. He hopped inside a self-driving taxi. The company emblem, three overlapping tree silhouettes, was painted on the side of the vehicle.

"State your destination," a robotic voice commanded.

"Westview Apartments!"

"Westview Apartments confirmed."

"Now call the CEO of Global Nature Protection Organization!" Maxson instructed as the car began to drive off. The call was picked up almost immediately.

"Hello?"

"You can not give Fletchman ownership of the last forest! I made a mistake! Forget what I told you earlier! I swear I won't leak your stealing to the media!"

"I-I'm sorry," the voice stammered. "It's too late. I can't do anything about it. They're bringing in the heavy duty logging machines as we speak."

"Nooo!" Maxson screamed. He hung up, pulled out his cell phone, and opened an app created by the Global Nature Protection Organization. It told you the amount of trees left in the world. It was currently only at around two hundred million, but Maxson knew that within the next week, the count would be at zero.

The End.

The Tree Quest

By William, age 10

Day One

Good morning, or afternoon. I can't tell what time of day it is because the SMOG is so thick, that my whole town is coughing and having trouble breathing. It's annoying and dangerous at the same time. It killed all the trees.

I forgot to introduce myself. I'm Ethan Zhang.

It's time for the mayor's announcement. Usually it's just lies about how the SMOG is getting smaller. But, wait, what's this news? He just said he will pick one student to "save the world" tomorrow. I feel sorry for whoever has to do his dirty work.

Day Two

I received a letter from the mayor that I was chosen to "save the world." This is a joke, right?

I'm at the mayor's office, along with other kids who also got the same message. They're pacing nervously, looking for an exit. They think this is real?

The mayor walks in and announces, "Welcome lucky students, I am your mayor, and the UN decided you all will be saving the world. As you can tell, there is a lot of S.M.O.G outside, polluting the earth and destroying the trees. Your job is to go on a quest, to save the world. Any questions?"

Everyone puts up their hand, including me, because I am not sure this is fake now. Someone asks, "How do we save the world?"

The mayor says, "You need to find the mythical animal in the Amazon, that caused this SMOG to come out!" Then, he adds: "Ethan Zhang is your leader."

Day Three

On the plane on the way to the Amazon, I finally learn the other kids' names, and give them nicknames. Joey the Brainiac, Bear the Strong, James the Fast and Scaredy Larry.

After exploring the forest all day searching for some mythical creature, we're all exhausted and Bear is standing on a pit and falls in! We look down, and next to Bear is something dark and large? But what?

We slide down into the pit carefully, tying ourselves to a rope for safety. When we reach the bottom, we see the mythical animal the mayor was talking about! It looks like a donkey mixed with a sheep. It's asleep next to giant statues. We trap it with a net.

Suddenly the cement cracks and breaks. Five giant statues come alive! We run and barely make it out alive. The giant comes within an inch of grabbing us for a meal! We keep running and signal the helicopters with our phone. They come pick us up, and we fly back home. We are all tired after that adventure.

When we arrive at the mayor's home, he says, "Good job. This animal was meant to remove carbon dioxide, but it instead let out a lot of S.M.O.G! We will take this animal, and reverse the change. The world owes you a debt."

We just saved the world. And I also made new friends. Until next time!

The End.

The Seeds

By Xuyuan, age 11

As John stepped through the abandoned dust-covered attic, he heard a crack, lifted his foot and found a packet of oval-shaped 'flower seeds'. He ran downstairs, yelling, "Grandpa, Grandpa! What are these seeds?"

His grandpa looked up from his book nestled on his rocking chair and took the packet. With a wistful gleam in his eye, he croaked, "There was a time when our home was covered in green, and the sky was blue. Species of animals other than humans and our common housepets used to roam the outside world. You used to be able to look out the window and see roofs of leaves, orange, yellow, and red. I used to wake up to the sound of birds chirping and singing." His grandpa laughed to himself in disbelief as he clasped his shaky hands together and said, "Not in 2124."

Puzzled, John glanced out the window and frowned at the never-ending sea of grey. He tried to imagine the sky blue and the ground green, but it was like trying to pull out a memory he never had.

John's grandpa reached for his hand, "Come on, there is something I've been wanting to show you for a long time." As his grandpa stood up, he heard a choir of bones cracking; "I need you to make me a promise, though." John eagerly nodded his head as his grandpa led him toward his usually off-limits basement. He untwisted the pendant that he wore everywhere and grabbed a key; one John had never seen. Then, his grandpa stuck it through the keyhole and turned the rusty vault wheel, a deafening sound of metal grinding echoed in their ears. Immediately, his nose was attacked by a unique, light freshness- he didn't even have the word to describe it.

His eyes adjusted to the bright, vibrant colours as his grandpa said, "I've been growing this for your whole life, using spare seeds from my attic. I-"

Abruptly, they heard three loud knocks on the door. "Stay here," my grandpa demanded, slamming the basement door shut behind him. John could tell his grandpa was alarmed because no one ever visited.

While he was gone, John studied the vivid 'plants.' In the middle of the room stood a square wooden box filled with black and brown sand? He wasn't sure what that was. Thick green strings slithered out and rocketed toward the LED lights overhead. His eyes felt blinded; the sight was a contrast to the dull, grey world he knew. He reached out to touch but heard a commotion from up top.

John pressed his ear to the door, the sound of his heart beating louder than the voices. "We know you have them," a stranger asserted. "You can't hide the seeds forever. We've been tracking some excessive energy use in this area."

His grandpa's shaky voice responded, "I don't know what you're talking about."

John's mind raced as he reached for the door handle - were they in trouble?

The End.

The Darklings' Prophecy

By Yixuan, age 12

Leaf flew across the tips of the trees. Catching his mother's eye he flew to the pavilion.

"Leaf!" his mother called, "Are you ready for the fall? Remember this year you will be sleeping deep underground with the rest of us. You're old enough to do so now."

"Mother, what if I don't want to sleep there?" Leaf asked

"Leaf, I'm sure you'd love it. You won't remember a thing of what happened during the harsh winters in the rainforest. Us Forestlings wouldn't have survived this long if it weren't for the underground sleep areas we made for the winter," his mother replied.

"Alright, I'll try it," Leaf declared.

* * *

Leaf extended his leaf shaped wings and emerged from the undergrowth. He looked around and yelped in surprise.

"Mother!" he called, "There are no more trees!"

"No. This can't be happening," his mother said in disbelief, "The Darklings' prophecy came true. Impossible! After all these years!?"

"The Darklings' are known for their prophecies, you know. They always come true," rasped the village elder. *"In the dawn of the new birth, and after the birth of the Trees and the Death of the Snow, the trees shall disappear. When the new queen and peace is found, the trees shall reappear."*

"The prophecy should have happened a long time ago," Sloth said. Sloth was Leaf's older brother and he was born days before the prophecy was told.

"Queen Magnolia, you will surely visit the other Queens and ask about the disappearing trees right?" the Royal Adviser, Petunia, asked.

"Of course, I will. Sloth please tell your father that he will be in charge of the Forestlings while I'm gone. Petunia, I shall leave with you at sundown," Queen Magnolia answered, "Birch, please send the fastest messengers out to ask the other Queens to meet at the United Dragons Mountain."

So Queen Magnolia, Queen Shadow, Queen Otter, Queen Blizzard, and Queen Dune all met at the United Dragons Mountain. They all said that their trees had disappeared!

"Some of the aquatic plants have also disappeared," Queen Otter stated, "Some types of kelp have disappeared."

The tree disappearance has caused many difficulties for the Forestlings. As Forestlings they live in the trees. Throughout their lives, they learn how to hunt in trees, know which trees are safe, and how to hunt without rustling any of the leaves. But now, it was as if all their prey had disappeared with the trees.

"Mother," Leaf asked, "Will the trees ever reappear?"

"Of course they will Leaf," his mother replied, "All we need to do is find a new queen."

* * *

"Mother, surely some dragon is going to find out that you have caused the trees to disappear right?" Princess Shade asked.

"Nonsense darling. How will any dragon find out?" Queen Shadow replied, "I'm protecting our image. Surely no dragon can find out that no Darkling has any more powers right? We'll just be dragons. The Desertlings have their sand like colour and their ability to summon major sandstorms even in places without sand. The Forestlings can speed up plant growth and create new and possibly dangerous plants. The Riverlings can swim for extended periods of time and they can live underwater without worrying about losing their breath underwater. The Airlings have super hot fire and the ability to fly faster than the peregrine falcon. The Winterlings have their frostbite and their ability to handle freezing cold temperatures. And what do we have? NOTHING! We'll be open for att--"

"Yes mother I know. You've told me this at least a hundred times," Princess Shade interrupted.

* * *

"Princess Shade!" the Royal seer called, "As you know I am one of the last three Darklings with powers and I have received another prophecy."

"What is it about Twilight?" Shade asked.

"I think it's best if I recite the prophecy to you," Twilight replied, "*In the hands of the Shadows nothing exists. Everything shall disappear. Beware the Queen or constantly fear what is to come next.*"

"Oh dear. Do you think it's about..." Shade looked around and dropped her voice to whisper, "My mother?"

"Yes. That is exactly what I believe. It's one of the short prophecies that basically say what they mean. And if my suspicions are correct the only way to fix this is to... Oh dear. You wouldn't like that. No, you both wouldn't like that," Twilight sighed.

"I'm afraid I must do it, Twilight. I must challenge my mother for the throne," Shade answered. "Umbrage? Can you please tell my mother I would like to challenge her to the throne?"

Umbra gasped in shock, catching the attention of the other dragons. "Are you sure about this Princess? None of us want you to die," Umbra whispered.

"I'm sure. Now, please go and tell her."

The next day, a public announcement was released.

"Attention all Darklings! It has been announced that Princess Shade of the Darklings would like to challenge Queen Shadow of the Darklings to a duel for the throne. This is a fight to DEATH."

On the day of the duel the two dragons circled around each other waiting for the other one to pounce.

"Now darling, remember who trained you. I know ALL of your weaknesses, and there are many," Shadow seethed, "How dare you challenge me?!"

"Mother, I trained with many dragons. I have many tricks I've never shown you before," Shade retorted.

Shadow leaped at Shade and Shade jumped and twisted in mid-air to use her hind legs to claw at her mother's belly. Shadow growled in pain and laughed a bitter laugh.

"Darling! How could you scratch your own mother?!" Shadow said in a small plaintive voice.

"Mother, your mind tricks don't work on me anymore. So just stop the act," Shade spat.

Shade leapt at her mother who dodged just in time. She recovered quickly and just as her mother leapt over her, she jumped up and pinned her mother's tail to the ground. Her mother yelped in surprise and her expression changed from surprise to anger.

"Who taught you that?! After I kill you I shall kill them. Now daughter I COMMAND you with the power of my CROWN to tell me who taught you that!" Shadow snarled.

"Not if I do this." Shade retorted and as fast as a peregrine falcon she darted to the front of her mother and slashed at her neck. Her mother ROARED in pain and Shade was sure the Riverlings swimming in their seas could hear her. Soon her mother collapsed in pain and exhaustion.

"Darling, I'm sorry you had to find out this way but a lot of Darklings still have powers. I still have powers. My power is magic. I can 'curse' objects to do what I want it to do. Every tribe has some of those types of dragons," Shadow whimpered.

"Shhhh. Mother, it's okay. Just rest now. One day we'll see each other again and there will be no more secrets or fighting," Shade whispered, "I'm sorry it had to end like this."

Everyone mourned the loss of Queen Shadow and soon Queen Shade sent messengers to the other queens saying Queen Shadow died and the new queen from the prophecy was found. Obviously she left out the gruesome stuff and now the trees were back.

* * *

Leaf twirled around in the Autumn breeze. Laughing, he joined Sloth and his friends at the pavilion. He was ready for the long winter sleep and hopefully (talons crossed) the trees wouldn't disappear again.

"Leaf! Sloth! There you are!" his mother exclaimed joyfully, "Listen I have news. Queen Shadow died and her daughter Shade is now Queen. I was away helping Queen Otter with the Riverling part at the Onyx Mountain. It's a new school Queen Shade proposed. Leaf and Sloth, you are both accepted. Also, as you might have noticed, the trees are back!!"

"Mother, when do we start school?" Sloth asked. Sloth was always eager to make new friends and learn new things.

"Mother? What are we going to do about our winter hibernation? Clearly we can't go underground inside of a mountain," Leaf inquired.

"It's alright, Leaf. One of the dragons from the Riverlings has magical powers. You'd learn about that in school. Anyways, they cast a spell to make sure Onyx Mountain is always warm and sunny. Apparently, Riverlings love their sunshine and warmth as much as we do. So you won't need to worry about hibernation. There is also a special school for the magical dragons. They're going to try to create different spells by combining their magic to make each of our habitats to a temperature we like and feel comfortable in. As for your question Sloth, you guys will start tomorrow. Papaya and Sunshine will join you as the four Forestlings in the Onyx Mountain School," his mother said.

Leaf and the others left for school and they lived happily with trees.

The End.

STORY STUDIO ANTHOLOGIES



Story Studio is an award-winning charity that inspires, educates and empowers youth to be great storytellers, transforming lives and strengthening communities.

We rely entirely on grants, donations and volunteers to support projects like our writing contests.

If you like what we do, please consider making a donation at storystudio.ca.

Find us on Instagram & Facebook:
[@storystudiowritingsociety](https://www.instagram.com/storystudiowritingsociety)

Cover photo by Augustine Wong on Unsplash.

Story Studio Creative Writing Contests are sponsored by Orca Book Publishers
www.orcabook.com

