

The Fourth Forest



Grade	<u>6th</u>
Fiction	<u>✓</u>
Poetry	<u> </u>
Nonfiction	<u> </u>

My breath grew heavy, my heart was pounding in my throat. Floorboards creaked outside my bedroom and a shadow passed by the door. I looked at the alarm clock and saw the glowing red numbers were in a pattern that was shaped like 4:00 A.M. My mother had left for work already and we have no pets, so whatever passed by the door isn't welcome here. I slowly got out of bed and put on my slippers. The hallway light that shone under my door began to flicker. It was official, someone was in the house. I made my way to the closet and opened it, revealing a polished wooden bat. Armed with the bat, I opened my bedroom door and entered the dimly lit hall. The temperature change sent a shiver down my spine. It was so cold that I could see my own breath. Suddenly a bright white light rounded the corner and paused. The light began to form a silhouette of a woman with flowing hair and a calm expression. She wore a simple-looking dress and stood so straight it seemed as if a pole had replaced her spine. As I gripped the bat tighter she slowly walked toward me. The bat suddenly felt heavy in my hands and it slipped out of my grip. An evil grin was now plastered on the woman's face as she lunged toward me. Her cold fingers wrapped around my neck and she pinned me to the ground.

"Robin Verin! What a pleasure to meet you! I mean, for the moment that you'll be alive, but of course, I'll spare your life if you tell me where the Fourth Forests are located. If not," She raised her

hand and claws replaced her nails, “ You won’t live to see the sunrise!” She let out a laugh that made my ears sting. Looking over to where the bat was, I knew that grabbing it wouldn’t be possible.

I looked back at the woman, “ Sorry, but I don’t know what you mean by the “Fourth Forest.” I had to say something, had to buy time. The woman’s face turned a bright shade of red that made me nervous. She was about to scratch me with her claws, but I kneed her in the ribs. She let out a yelp and rolled off of me, clutching her side. I grabbed the bat and was about to start running but she raced up and blocked my path. I swung the bat and hit her across the head. She fell down again, this time unconscious. I raced downstairs, grabbed my phone, and began dialing my mother.

The phone rang and rang until a woman’s soft voice said, “ Robin? Why are you calling me this early in the morning?” I looked back up the stairs, the woman was still unconscious, “ Mom, there is a stranger in the house!” I yelled frantically. There was a slight pause. I looked at the phone and saw that the call had ended. My phone’s battery was dead. I looked back at where the unconscious woman lay and my heart stopped. She was gone.

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“Did you find out the location of the Fourth Forest?” said a man on a golden throne. The man sat in the shadows, unable to be seen.

“No, sir. She knocked me out and I lost focus. I returned to this realm,” whispered the woman in the plain dress. She had no color, she was just a small white figure kneeling before the Shadow King. The King slammed his fist against his throne and yelled, “You had one easy job and yet you let a human girl stop you!” The woman flinched. The man sighed and said, “Looks like we’ll have to find the location of the Fourth Forest the hard way.” A horrible laugh filled the room and a plan was made.

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My alarm clock went off. I turned toward and saw the time. It was 7:45 A.M. I had to be at school by 8:00 A.M. I leaped from my bed threw on random clothes. I rushed downstairs, grabbed my homework, and shoved it in my backpack. I shoved my feet into leather heel boots, threw on a gray jacket, and ran out the door. Outside the cold air nibbled at my skin. The sky was clear. At the end of the street sat the bus. I ran even faster, but the doors shut and the bus slowly pulled away. I waved my arms, trying to get the bus driver’s attention, but the bus turned a corner and disappeared. Out of breath, I took a rest. I had to think of something! Looking around, I saw my school through some trees. The forest! I ran into the tree line and didn’t stop running. Deeper into the forest, I realized that dark clouds filled the once blue sky. Thunder roared in the distance. Confused, I climbed up a tree. In the tree, I saw that I couldn’t even see the town or neighborhood. Where did this unexpected weather come from? The rustling of bushes grabbed my attention. There was a little shrub that was shaking. An unfamiliar

animal popped out. It was a fox, but it had nine tails. The fox was gray and faded to a light purple at the tails, paws, and ears. Around its neck rested a necklace with a glowing emerald. The fox looked up at me with its silver eyes. I leaped from the tree to see it closer. The fox looked into my eyes with a calmness, like the strange woman did when I first saw her, but this fox didn't look like it wanted to hurt me. Out of the blue, the fox opened its mouth to say, "Robin Verin. Finally, I've found you. I was on my way to get you, but none of that. I'm Silver Paw. Your familiar." My mouth fell open. A fox just talked to me. I replied by saying, "My familiar? What is that? And how do all these weird people and animals," I pointed to the fox, "know my name!" Silver Paws closed his eyes and shook his head, "Robin, the woman you saw in your house this morning was an unguided spirit. I'm a familiar, not an animal or an evil spirit that was sent by the Shadow King, the man who wants to concur the Fourth Forest." Silver Paw said to me seriously. Should I trust this talking fox? Who knows, maybe he shouldn't trust me because I'm going crazy! Taking a deep breath, I asked, "Um, Silver Paws, what's a familiar?" Silver Paw smiled and replied, "A familiar is like an animal that protects you. Familiar's also help you learn what your magic ability is, I'm a kitsune or a nine-tailed fox." The word kitsune rang a bell in the back of my mind. I've heard they're mythological creatures that have the ability to see and hear anything that happens in the world. A bolt of lightning flashed across the sky. A loud roar in the distant followed it. Silver Paws looked up and gave a little sigh. "It's about to rain. I should get you to the camp before

the storm starts up.” Silver Paws said walking past me and deeper into the forest. I didn’t want to follow him, but a flash of lightning startled me and pressured me to follow. The forest we were in was just like a normal forest, at first, but suddenly changed. Tall multi-colored trees that changed color were everywhere. Clear lakes housed huge fish and frogs. The thing that really surprised me though was a deer. It was black with white stripes and ocean blue eyes. A girl with curly, long brown hair popped out of the forest. Her glowing emerald eyes locked with my grey ones. She wore jeans and an undershirt. A jean jacket kept her warm in the cool air. “Elian! What are you doing out here? Don’t you see the storm moving in!” Silver Paws yelled out. Elian pointed to the deer. Silver Paws nodded and watched as the girl got on the deer. The deer waited and then galloped into the forest and disappeared behind all of the multi-colored trees. “ You’ll probably be in a cabin with Elian and trust me, even though she is very quiet, once you get to know her, she is most likely going to be your friend for life.” Silver Paws sounded happy when he said this. Was Elian his best friend or something? “ Um, Silver Paws, how do you know Elian?” I asked, worried about the response. Silver Paws stopped and look at the sky. He gave a sign and looked at me. “I saved Elian when she was 5 years old, or at least I tried to. The Shadow King got to her before I could and drained most of her magic. That gave the Shadow King the ability to track her, he knew she was going to be taken to the camp you’re going to, Camp Amethyst, but we planted these trees. They protect the outside worlds from getting in unless you’re meant to be

here.” After finishing his sentence, I looked at the multi-colored trees. They were like the guardians of Elian and the camp, but how long would they last? Did they have a weakness? I mean, everything has a weakness.

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In a dark room sat the Shadow King. He was looking through books until a woman barged into the room holding a giant book. The Shadow King rose from his chair and looked at the woman with a death stare. The room was silent. The woman broke the silence by saying quietly but loud enough for him to hear, “I think I found where the Fourth Forest. But...”

“But what?” The Shadow King interrupted. The woman struggled to hold the book so she quickly said, “Many trees protect a camp, Camp Amethyst, from any outside harm.” The Shadow King motioned her to bring the book to him. The woman walked over to him and set the book in front of him. The king flipped through the old book and snickered. The Shadow King continued to read the book. He eventually flipped a page in the book to find a spell that could kill the trees. He flipped it again to find a page on Camp Amethyst. On the page was written, “Camp Amethyst is a camp where kids with powers go. These kids are all to grow up and kill the Shadow King.” The Shadow King shut the book. He now knew he had to find and destroy Camp Amethyst before concurring the Fourth Forest.

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Silver Paws and I walked through the rain. The trees around us didn't stop glowing, even as all the lightning and thunder struck them. After walking for about 5 minutes, Silver Paws and I approached an arched branch with the words, Camp Amethyst, carved into it. We walked under the branch into a cave. As Silver Paws and I got deeper into the cave, branches covered the cave's entrance. We were now in darkness. "Um, Silver Paws, did we take a wrong turn?" I asked, scared. A little light sparked in front of us and turned into a portal. Through the portal were kids of all ages running around in the sun. Some had wands in their hands and all different sparks of colors blasted out of the tips of the wands. All the kids seemed to wear uniforms. The girls wore spruce colored skirts and white T-shirts that were tucked into the skirts. The boys wore spruce colored pants and T-shirts. "Welcome to Camp Amethyst, Robin." Silver Paws said to me as he walked through the portal. I followed and as soon as I set foot on the grass, I wore the uniform all the girls were wearing. I followed Silver Paws, feeling all the camper's eyes st on me. As I continued through the camp, I saw that there were at least 6 huge cabins separated from each other. All the cabins had different colored words carved into the top of them and parts of the wood were the same color as the words. "Silver Paws, what's up with all the different names for the cabins and why are they different colors?" I asked still walking. Silver Paws answered, "All the kids have different powers that are categorized into 6 different categories. You'll be in one of the cabins after they test your powers." As we continued to walk, we soon were standing in front of the biggest

cabin here. Silver Paws entered the building I did the same. Inside were more kids walking around with books in their arms. Some were in what looked like a mess hall, playing with their powers with animals next to them. "Silver Paws, did you find all these kids and bring them to Camp Amethyst?" I asked. Silver Paws shook his head and nodded his head to some of the animals. "The familiar that belongs to that person brings them to camp. I brought Elia here because her familiar, Star, was protecting the camp. At the time we didn't have the trees protecting us." As Silver Paws finished his sentence, a man in a suit and tie confronted us. The man looked to be about in his 60's and had a tiger following him. Silver Paws looked at the man and said, "Mr. Woodern, I found Robin Verin. She has no scars and hasn't lost any of her magic." Silver Paws sound proud of this. Mr.Woodern faced me and said, "Hello Mrs.Verin. As you know I'm Mr.Woodern, the owner of this camp." Mr.Woodern said putting out his wrinkly hand for me to shake. I shook his hand and said, "Mr.Woodern, about the test, is it about what your magic ability is or how much you know about magic?" I asked, worried. All this magic stuff is all new to me, but I know that I have a kitsune as a familiar and he can help me! But can he help me with the test? Mr.Woodern answered, " The test is based on what your magic ability is. When we find out what your ability is, I'll put you in the cabin that will fit you the best." We? What did he mean by we? Mr.Woodern lead me to a huge room with 5 other people in it. All the people in the room seemed to have different powers. A woman

with green hair and tan skin stood up. She wore a long flowing dress with roses around her waist like a belt. She said to me in a soft voice, "Hello, Mrs. Verin. I'm Rosemary, the leader of the green cabin or the Planter's cabin." As she sat down a man with orange hair that faded to red stood up. He wore torn jeans, a black shirt with a fire on it, and a long brown jacket. He said with a loud voice, "Sup Robin. I'm Dragoon. The leader of the red cabin, also known as the Fireball's cabin." He sat down. The other three were Midnight, Angel, and Seaweed. The leaders of the Dark cabin, Light cabin, and Water cabin. Their names complimented their outfits. Like Rosemary and Dragoon. Five different items suddenly appeared before me. A ball of light, water, fire, plants, and just darkness. I looked at the items. "Ms. Verin, the items you see in front of you are all the different elements at this camp. One of these items holds a memory that will reveal what your power is." Mr. Woodern said. The room was suddenly filled with darkness. A little light suddenly flashed on in front of me. Under the light was a black choker. I found myself approaching the choker and picking it up. The light above me grew brighter and brighter until it exploded, leaving me in darkness. The choker in my hand started glowing so I put it out in front of me, so I could see if there was anything in front of me as I walked through the darkness. I heard crunching of glass as I continued to walk through the darkness. I sometimes found myself stopping to look at the choker. It looked familiar to me, but where have I seen it before. "We can't keep her with us! Soon enough, he'll come for her!" said a woman in the darkness. A little girl appeared in

front of me. The little girl had black hair and grey eyes. She wore what seemed like a nightgown. The girl was peering through what seemed like an invisible doorway. Two more people appeared before me. One was a woman with dark brown hair and grey eyes. The other was a man with black hair and blue eyes. The man sat in a chair, face buried in his cupped hands. The woman stood up with her arms crossed. The woman said, "Honey, we have to put her in an orphanage or she'll attach monsters to the village. Maybe even the Shadow King too!" The woman was on the brink of tears. The man looked up and said, "I don't want to have her deal with the monsters alone. They might kill her!" The little girl looked terrified as she listened to the people argue on what to do with her. Finally, the girl had enough and stepped out of her hiding spot so the people could see her. "Why do you want to get rid of me, mommy and daddy." The girl started crying. The two people, her parents, looked at her with sadness in their eyes. The little turned around and ran toward me. The girl ran right through me like I was a ghost. That's when it hit me. "Robin! Wait!" The woman yelled, running after the girl. The girl was me. The younger me was kneeling on the ground crying. My parents stood behind her. "Sweetie, we have no choice but to send you to a camp." said the mother. My younger self stood up and faced the parents. She looked up at my parents with glowing red eyes. "Just leave me be! If you want to get rid of me, then leave me be! The younger me yelled. A bright light suddenly appeared and blinded me. When it disappeared, my heart stopped. My parents were turned to stone. My young self was standing in front of the

stone people for one moment then ran the other way crying. My eyes were still locked on my stone parents. A white figure started floating from my mom's stone body. The figure was the same woman that was in my house this morning. That woman was my mother. She became an unguided soul because of me. My mother had a black choker around her neck. My mother yanked on the choker until it broke off, then threw it on the ground. My mother's spirit and my stone father disappeared. I was back in the room with Mr. Woodern and the 5 cabin leaders. Tears were running down my cheeks. The black choker was still in my hand. "So my power is like Medusa's?" I asked. Before anyone could answer, I ran out of the room and out of the building. I kept on running through the camp until I saw the portal I had come through. I didn't want others to get hurt because of me. I looked around. No one was around to witness me step through the portal. I was in the dark cave once again. As I continued to walk the portal became smaller and smaller until it was gone. I put my hand in front of me so I wouldn't run into anything. After a while, my hand was touching what seemed like wood. The wood moved out of the way to reveal the multi-colored trees and the bright sun. The storm had passed. I was no longer wearing the camp uniform. I was wearing the clothes I had put on this morning. A backpack rested on the trunk of a tree. I ran over to it and grabbed it. As I walked through the forest, something in my backpack started ringing. Confused, I stopped, set my backpack down, and opened it to see my phone ringing. I grabbed it and saw that my mom was calling me. Without touching my phone's screen, the phone was

answered, "Hello?" I said. A man answered, "Hello, Robin is it?" Without even thinking I responded by saying, "Yes? Who are you and do I know you?" There was a chuckle on the other end, "I'm sure you have heard stories of me, but if you must know, I'm the legendary Shadow King." The man said. My heart stopped, "Robin, you must be wondering how I am calling you. I'm using your mom's phone, who is, in fact, my prisoner, but you can save her if you come back to your house and show me where Camp Amethyst is." The Shadow King said. Anger filled my heart. No one calls me and says that my mom a prisoner. "Why do you want to know where Camp Amethyst is? What is so special about it!" I yelled, furiously. There was a long silence. The Shadow King sighed and hanged up. I looked at the phone and then threw it in fury. I started running through the forest, leaving my backpack behind. Something in hand began to glow. I looked down to see the black choker. I sighed and said to it, "Can you show me where the Shadow King is?" I can't believe I'm talking to an inanimate object! It grew brighter and brighter and a little ball of light appeared from it. The light started moving deeper into the forest. I put on the choker and followed it. Soon enough I found myself standing on a concrete street. The light was now floating in front of my home. I walked up the porch steps and opened the front door. The light disappeared as I entered the house. The front door slammed shut, but no one was near it. My heart stopped when I saw a figure lying in the corner. As I walked toward it, I realized it was my mother. I ran to her and saw she was chained to a wall. She was fast asleep. A laugh behind me startled me. I

turned around to see the Shadow King. He was dressed just like a king in fairy tale books. A crown sat on his head. "Well, well. Someone learned some magic." He said, mocking me. I yelled back at him, "Let her go!" The Shadow King raised his hand and a black ball appeared in it. He said, "Tell me where Camp Amethyst is then, little girl."

"Never!" I yelled. The Shadow King sighed as pointed the black ball toward my mother. She suddenly turned to ashes and disappeared. My heart stopped. I faced the Shadow King. My eyes were glowing red. Suddenly I heard him yell in agony, but all I saw was black. The last thing I heard was, "It's ok Robin, your safe!" Then I fell unconscious. I woke up in what seemed like a hospital bed. There was a girl peering over me. It was Elian. "Earth to Robin? You awake?" She asked. I sat up. I was back at Camp Amethyst. My head hurt. Then I remembered something. "My mom, is she ok?" I asked. Elian looked down and shook her head. I started crying. Elian hugged me. I knew from that day forward that nothing was going to be the same because my mom, well stepmom, was gone and my real parents too. But I wonder if the Shadow King is still alive and if my old mother's corrupted soul is still out there, looking for me.