La Luna

Steph Lopez

In hindsight I knew it wasn't a good decision. I mean anyone could have seen that. But they were all doing it, every last one of them. And I didn't want to seem like a wimp. So I stared up at the tree...it didn't look inviting like Grandmother Willow, nope. The tree was giant, branches sprouting from everywhere, but some of the branches were small, some big, some cut at an angle...as if someone tried to tame it but could never quite accomplish it. It was most definitely unlike any tree I had ever seen, and reminded me of nothing more than the mountainous thorns on which Maleficent perched her winged form.

But I climbed

and climbed

and climbed.

And when I turned to see behind me, I saw nothing but the leaves blowing in the heavy breeze. It was peaceful. There was no one beside me, no one below me. I was alone. But that didn't matter, I had done it and everyone saw me go up. The light that shone through the branches next to me caught my attention. I stood there in awe, and saw shades of brown everywhere. The leaves swaying, a golden brown in the sun. The branch beneath my feet matching the color of the wall of a house in the distance. The dirt being kicked up by the children, those who pushed me to climb, those who now looked like ants. Like coppered-skinned little ants. They scramble around the patched field of dead grass after a ball. The more I looked out, the more I wanted to see how much the world would change if I went further. I wanted to know if I could reach the moon and pull it closer to me, just for the night. Only halfway there I thought, the kids before me walking further up before jumping off.

So I climbed, again. Going up until there was no more to go. The

wind was stronger is here, pushing the leaves into a dance I had never seen. I loved it. My hair was in a ponytail but I was positive that if it wasn't I would've looked like Pocahontas in that moment. I closed my eyes and breathed in the air, pretending that I would never have to leave.

"*¿Qué haces? ¡Bajate de allí niña!*"

I opened my eyes to see the bane of my 6-year-old existence, the temperamental teacher who even my mother hated. She looked furious, even from up here, I could see the small vein popping from her forehead. She made her way closer and closer to the tree. I scurried, trying to make it down before she could catch me. But climbing was easy, getting down was not. I moved carefully, stepping around each jagged branch. I could still hear her yelling. I stepped on the next branch, it was a little one but it seemed sturdy. My foot went on it, bending it slightly, and SNAP.

For a second, I saw everything. I felt everything. I felt my head being tugged upwards by something near my jaw. I saw the teacher rush to my side, pushing me up and sliding me into her arms. I saw red, dripping from my cheeks and onto my shirt. I saw the kids rushing towards me. But that second passed, and then I saw nothing.

I woke hours later, from what I was told. But I don't remember much. All I remember is being flooded with brown. I opened my eyes and saw nothing but the brown I love, one that matched the leaves in the trees. The one in my mom's eyes. She pulled me close and told me never again.

I looked up at her as she said it, the tears streaming down her face. I hid in her chest. It wasn't until a week later when she was changing the bandages that I told her about the moon, about the wind in my hair. She just smiled and said,

"*La luna está más cerca que nunca.*"