

2017 International Essay Contest for Young People

[Children's Category – 3rd Prize]

Nature: Depths in the hills

(Original)

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All of the mankind yearns for contentment, but what is this yearning all about? I asked myself one day as I sat beside the windowsill in my room.

Dear Diary,

I am going through the daily stresses of being a teenager. My life mundane as a wet weekend in Wigan. Frustrated as I could be, I return from school under the burning sun when something unexpected happens. I breathe a sigh as my mother tells me to pack up for the hills. "We're leaving in two hours", she says, my smile widens to a curve.

I live in India- a country known for its proximity to nature. Ironic as that may sound, I hardly ever witness the true beauty of nature in my hometown. Carbon emissions from vehicles and acidic rain pouring down haunt the survival of plants. That surely isn't the situation one would want to seek solace in, is it? We drive for nine hours straight from the bustling city of Delhi to the serene town of Lansdowne in the north of Uttarakhand.

Viridity fills my lungs as the hill station draws closer. Two well-dressed attendants await our arrival and greet us with a smile. We are welcomed with the traditional delicacies of the state. All of my anger fades away before pleasantness takes over and just as so, I blurt out a clumsy "thank you" to the people. We settle in.

A fresh wind breeze greets me; I wave my hand to nothingness in the air, just an artistic movement, and a gentle caress back to the wind and back to nature.

Back to nature...

I lie down on the fresh grass and stare at the sky. As a bee hums, I do the same. The atmosphere reverberates in the happiness, true contentment.

An answer to a question that was so long lost to me. This is my eureka moment, not in the bathtub but under the sky. Epiphany... I am exhilarated.

We often misinterpret contentment for comfort. True happiness is found in nature as it holds the power to connect with the inner self of a person. Nature is wholeness. Be it the childish joy of me spotting the Ursa Major in the night sky or the maturity of the seed compared to a new born child. We, as a society of beings, take our greatest teacher for granted. Science has brought to us the most comfortable of chairs and the most convenient of methods. All for what? An even more hassled brain? For the majesty of the human brain turning into an automated machine?

Nature has empowered us more significantly than the deadly ammunitions of warfare. An apple fell down a tree and laws of gravitation were discovered. Nature teaches us to take pride and look for happiness in the smallest of things: Morning Dew, blooming flowers or the clouds in the sky. What is important is not the momentary pleasures but satisfaction from within. A jewel of thought coined by Albert Einstein rightly fits in "Look deep into nature and then you will understand everything better." An encounter with nature can change perspectives and compel beings into respecting other beings. Nature teaches mankind how simplicity and generosity lead to success. Nature is abundant and interdependent, so should be the man. In the midst of nature, one can find grace, stillness, respect, interdependence, joy, and balance. All that is required of the leaders of today. For guaranteed success in future, the present must be taken into account. Inner satisfaction is a catalyst for future success and this inner satisfaction is found in depths of nature.

An experience with nature taught me what this yearning is all about as I sat on the windowsill, staring at the birds in the sky; Reflecting on the days ahead of me.