



Winter Solstice

By: True Kingsley

Dusk melted into blackness as Sarah twisted her metal flask shut. The air in the kitchen was heavy and warm, white lights glowed in the windows, and it was almost time.

She twisted her long hair up into a loose ponytail and then pulled on her father's tattered wool cap. Her heavy hiking boots clomped as she crossed the wide planks of the kitchen floor, then head out the back door toward the path.

Cold air seared her lungs, and she snuggled into her thick down jacket, listening to the crunch of the snow underneath her feet. Her gate grew rhythmic as she moved upward, through the tunnel of evergreen trees.

Muscle memory let her move along the dark path, without thinking, without effort. She pulled the hat off and let her hair down slowly, loving the weight of it on her back. Her eyes watered as she reached the bluff to watch the moon arrive over the horizon.

Her body was alive, the air crisp and cold on her cheeks. The year's problems seemed far away, for her there was only the now, and the future. She pulled the flask out of her bag, twisting off the cap, and lifting it to her lips. She let the thick, golden brandy slip down her throat warming her as she toasted the night.

She is a former writing teacher who is now slaving away at a new YA novel, trying to get it ready for submission. Currently, she is an adjunct professor at the University of New England.