

After I Survived the Canyon's Edge

By: Emma C. Anderson

It's been only a few months since our trip. Since dad was whisked away by whirling waters. Since I was all alone with the canyon's fierce grip. Since I became the raven mother always saw in me.

Trying to be calm after being snatched away with mud to gulp down my burning throat, and air to gobble down instead of food, was like grabbing on to a wet, spinning, and circular monkey bar.

Memories stomp in my brain like an army-like an antagonist's army. I see the same gruesome moment every night as I drift off into my own imagination.

We hear the growls and roars of an approaching tiger in a liquid form. A giant slams their raging foot into the earth making us bounce as if on a trampoline.

Dad throws me on the sunset canyon. I still remember his face-petrified, determined, and thinking about me. Thinking about how I would be all alone if he didn't hurry. Thinking about how he was always supposed to be next after mom died. Until the roaring, whirling, water decided he was done thinking. So the evil civilization of water wiped him out of my reach. The last thing I remember in the dream is the squawk of a raven.

My air was sucked out of my lungs as I woke up with an aching throat, and salty tears dripping off my face.

The canyon is done scaring me off.

The canyon will never again make me cough.

The canyon was defeated.

The canyon found knowledge and retreated.

The canyon holds nothing against me.

The canyon, in the end, knew nothing more but to flee.

After the incident, I found myself using that poem repeatedly throughout my days. The poem helped to ward off my PTSD, but the trauma will always remain a minute later. Nothing can stop it. It is stronger than the scrutinizing waves that washed dad beyond my reach. In that case, it is unbeatable.

My name is Nora. I survived the canyon's edge. So maybe I should word that differently.

I am unbeatable.

I survived the canyon's reach.

I survived the unending beach.

I survived the laws of nature.

I survived the canyon.

That is what I must think every night as I drift off to sleep. Or else I will be gobbled up in the never-ending fear of the past. The moments alone in that canyon. I am here now, safe and alive. No worries of dehydration-I have all the water I need. No worries of starvation-I have a full fridge. No worries of being alone-I have a dad, who will always be on his way.

There I sat with sticky, dried up tears. The darkness was revolting, and pushed me to think deeper than all the other nights I woke up crying before.

I am Nora. I defeated the canyon. A canyon that is narcissistic. A canyon that thought it was unbeatable. Until it was beaten. Because the truth is:

I am unbeatable.

I beat the canyon.

Even though I had no companion.

I did not break.

Even though the canyon wasn't fake.

I pushed through.

Even though the canyon blows.

I was unbreakable.

Even though I was incapable.

I was unbeatable.

Even though my wounds were almost untreatable.

My character is from an incredible book called The Canyon's Edge