

Choice 1: The Legend of Eagle Mountain

Early one morning a young boy stood at a trailhead. Before him rose a mighty mountain, which seemed all the mightier when compared with his smallness.

A trail led to the mountain and then up it to incredible heights before vanishing in the clouds. On this trail the boy could see other boys and young men, some of whom turned and beckoned him to follow.

The boy began to climb, refusing perhaps to believe that he could ever reach the top. At first the trail rose gently, and the boy had many companions. But soon he began to sweat and breathe heavily, and many of his companions turned away. And still the boy climbed.

At times he climbed quickly. At times he climbed slowly. At times he had to go down a little way to find another path or stop a while to catch his breath. But still he climbed. The trail became steeper, the air thinner, but the climber scarcely noticed for he had, along the way, become stronger of body and hardier of spirit. And still he climbed.

And finally in the cool peace of evening time, he stood alone at the top of the world and looked around him. To the left he saw a fiery golden sunset. To the right he saw a diamond-studded, silky-black night sky. Behind him he saw the trail that he had followed and the hikers who were following in his footsteps.

And in front of him he saw another mountain - and another - and another - and a whole procession of mountains marching off to the horizon. But the young man (for now he was a man) knew that none of these other mountains was insurmountable, that all could and would be climbed. For he had learned many skills in the climbing of the first mountain, and he would carry those skills with him long after this mountain was forgotten.

And besides, he could begin climbing the next mountain tomorrow. Tonight he would rest and celebrate and ponder the journey that he had completed. And so tonight, we pause to rest and celebrate and honor this fine young man, Eagle Scout _____, as he stands at the top of the world and looks around him.