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## Rediscovery

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She can see everything they can't.

Her nose is the key; with it, she has access to knowledge others can only dream of. To her, a scent is worth a thousand words.

When she raises her nose in the air, she learns about the squirrels sitting in the highest branches, and about the ants scurrying beneath her paws, and about the river flowing just beyond a human's line of vision. She learns all the secrets of the world.

She likes to sit within the walls of her domain. The sun is harsh and warm, but she does not mind. Bees hover lazily over the grass, and dragonflies dart in and out of sight.

Within her walls stands a lone tree, with branches that seem to extend forever upward, towards the clouds that travel slowly across the blue expanse.

She sees birds landing on the tree's branches. She races towards them, calling out to her people so she can show them the little animals. But, when she approaches, the creatures fly away. No matter how many times she tries to catch one, she always fails.

At the sound of her voice, her people come outside. They speak harshly, point towards the door. She understands; they want her inside. Why, she wonders. Why don't they want to see all the wonderful, strange things that she can see?

Her people are insistent. Grudgingly, she follows them into their home.

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As time creeps along, the sun's harsh warmth fades. Yellow leaves fall from the trees. The scent of flowers has faded. She stands in the dying grass, watching. Waiting.

Her people behave strangely. They make odd noises and offer her food. She does not understand what they want, so she sits down and decides to watch a small bug instead. To her surprise, she is given a piece of food and a pat on the head.

She sees another dog pass by, through the cracks in the fence. She opens her mouth to warn her people of the intruder; a growl rises in her throat, the fur on her back stands on end. She stands, preparing to protect her people.

Her people make another noise—strong and forceful. She lets her mouth close as the stranger disappears.

They give her another piece of food.

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Days and nights come and go, until all life seems to have vanished, and the air turns to ice, and the world is white and sparkling. Snowflakes dust her fur and drift lazily across a grey sky. She tells herself not to pause and examine the tiny, fragile crystals, and makes herself walk past the few blades of dead grass that can still be found. She pauses briefly when she sees a pinecone on the path, but moves on quickly.

Something small and furry runs in front of her—a squirrel. She pauses and watches it with a keen eye; everyone knows how dangerous squirrels can be. Her humans pull the thing around her neck, and make that forceful noise. Despite the danger, she trusts their judgement; she allows the creature to scurry away.

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The snow has melted. The sun has regained its strength, chasing away the cold. Flowers spring up everywhere, blue, yellow, and green.

She does not pause to smell them. She does not let her voice be heard. She is quiet and perfect, like the flowers surrounding her.

She hardly notices the dogs who pass by. She doesn't need to respond to them. Nor does she warn her masters of the squirrels creeping along the fence.

Her masters speak to her. She obeys, sitting down. She would do anything for them.

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One day, when her humans come home, with them is a smell. One that is familiar, but at the same time, new. It is another dog; a small, young dog. She understands; this one will live with her, under the masters' care.

This new member of the family is different. He pauses to smell everything. He lets his voice be heard. He runs like the wind, all through the home, all around their domain. He is small and innocent and full of wonder.

Outside, he barks at all the creatures who set foot in the yard. Squirrels and birds and butterflies scatter at the sound of his voice. She walks over to him, picks him up by the scruff of his neck, carries him to the door, and pushes him through the dog-door.

He blinks up at her with his large, grey eyes; she gives him a stern look.

The smaller dog runs out again, dashing between her legs, and proceeds to chase the birds off the lawn once more.

She watches from afar as the masters attempt to teach him. He pays them no heed; he is more interested in rolling in the grass and barking at anything that passes by the walls of the masters' domain.

He sees her, and rushes to her, holding a stick in his mouth. He holds it proudly, confidently, excited by his discovery. His tail is wagging, his eyes are bright.

He ignores the masters when they call his name.

Just briefly, she is reminded of something. She was like him, once. She, too, was wild and carefree and full of wonder. Back then, she knew everything; no secret could hide from her.

She sniffs the stick that he holds in his mouth: a stick from the tree in their yard. Many birds once rested upon it, before it broke and fell to the ground. Now, it seems, ants have claimed it. In fact, she sees one, scurrying along the edge of the wood.

She raises her nose to the breeze; the smells are overpowering. She senses so many things she has not noticed in a long time.

Perhaps this little friend is right. Perhaps she can learn the secrets of the world again.