



The Star Road

Myrtle Campbell

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Along the boulevard, past the bright-eyed bungalows among the sleepy houses, we walk on a night in early spring. Without conversation we stroll by Johnson's place where the little pond, round and smug, lies beneath the willows at the end of the hill.

Turning left, we begin to move upward brushed gently by the giant fir trees that spread darkly over the walk. A swift swerve of light rushes across the vacant lot and draws two ribboned pictures of wet weeds and shining pavement before it spatters away. Somewhere a door slams, a dog barks, and then another. Squares of yellow light disappear and the street ahead is dark.

Between the houses and through the trees to the east the sky glows, fuzzy pink, above the town. Leaving the cement walk we pad over the muddy earth which has a subtle smell of spring. Where the street ends, a country road crosses at right angles, bordered by scraggly old trees.

At a curve on the crest of the hill, the road forms a crisp edge from which the hill rolls down to flatten into fields that stretch on, wide and open to the misty horizon. Above the land the night sky, a pattern of stars, dwarfs us. Blown cool and refreshed, we stand gazing.

Here and there a star blinks at us solemnly while another never relinquishes its steady brightness; other stars hang closer; and we can almost reach out to snuff their light as we would snuff out a candle. Stillness, peace and a feeling of other-worldliness fill the air around us along the star road.