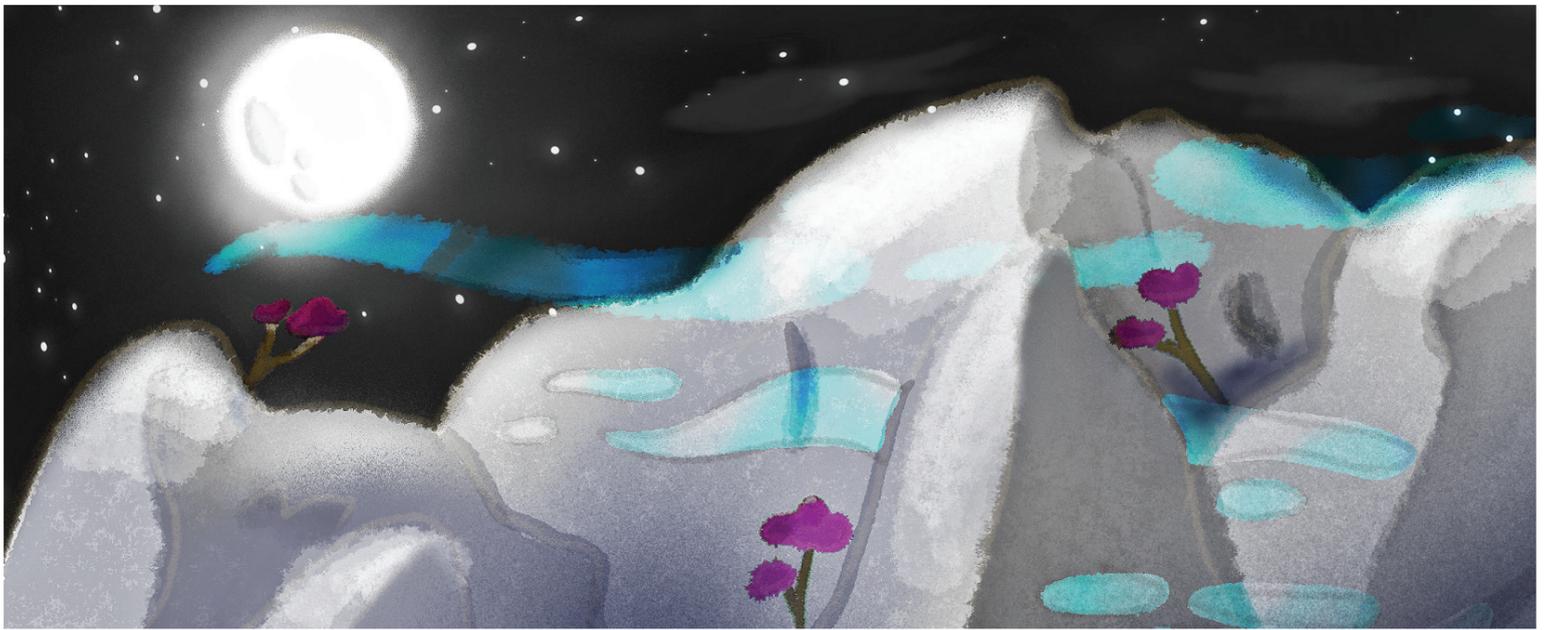


# YOUNG WRITERS PROJECT



“Mountains,” by Caris Gaito, 13, Burlington



## Papa's Cache Sabroso

It's a cool, brisk Friday evening. You can feel the wind hit your face and make you tear up as you move along the colorful, energetic streets that illuminate the way. Just along Division Street, you can feel the cars zooming by, making your ears feel numb. You can hear the cries and laughter of children playing on the playground, and the sounds of children running and falling to the ground and scraping their knees. You can hear the cries and shouts of worried parents calling out, then cotton jackets rustling: the children hugging their mothers and fathers with smiles as big as the moon that has yet to come. You can hear glass bottles clinking, and men and women laughing and shouting, “*Salud!*” which means “good health” in Spanish. The happiness of the night can be heard from the heart of downtown, and it truly makes up the heartbeat of Chicago.

Parking the car, walking out, you can see a beautiful Puerto Rican flag that proudly displays its blue, white, and red colors with confidence. It smiles across the whole street, letting every visitor, new and old, see its smile, and invites them to smile back as well.

Walking along the pavement, and there it is, that burnt-orange booth that stands out like a giant, red pimple on smooth, soft skin. That smell of fragrant spices catches your nose's attention and starts pulling you toward the orange booth. The sight of people taking bites of their food and smiling with glee. The sound of TV playing in the background and people talking and laughing with each other. From *jibaritos* to plantains, from rice and beans to *chuletas fritas*, it's all here. In this one place.

*Papa's Cache Sabroso*. A name that either rolls off the tongue like butter or cuts your tongue up like a knife. It is a place where memories are shared with family members and friends alike, with food so delectable you can taste it just by thinking about it. It is a place no bigger than the size of a hair salon, yet holds as many people as the mom and pop shop across the street with fresh foods lined up across the window, patiently waiting to be seen.

Your attention is already drawn, though. Papa calls your name like a mother does...

– NOAH CARMONA, 16,  
COLCHESTER

Excerpted; read complete review at [youngwritersproject.org/node/44061](http://youngwritersproject.org/node/44061)

## ABOUT YWP



Young Writers Project is a creative online community of writers and visual artists, based in Burlington since 2006. This page features highlights of the writing, photos, and art submitted each week to YWP's website. We invite all youth, ages 13-18, to sign up for a free account on [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org). Youth who are 12 may also join with a parental permission form found on the site. Teachers of younger students are encouraged to open accounts and submit work on behalf of their students. Join us and experience the YWP community: Create and connect with other young writers and artists, be inspired, and get published!

## The wind blows

The wind blows, swaying the trees, making them speak and rustle. The green leaves twirl and dance along the branches, which seem to hum as the air rushes by. They swing and sway, as if they are thinking that it doesn't matter what people think, just that they let loose and be flexible toward any place the wind takes them. They are adventurous, courageous, and confident. The wind blows, swaying the trees, and letting them be brave.

– MAELYN SLAVIK, 11,  
BURLINGTON

## Ghost fish

Sometimes I have a terrible feeling that there is a fish somewhere I forgot to feed. In a dim room, dust gathering on the surface, looking like a ghost. I can see right through him to the other side of the glass, and that makes me very scared, because I swear I fed him yesterday, watched him float to the surface and eat the three little pieces I dropped in for him. People say that dogs are the smartest animal, but they are wrong, because when I turn to leave, the fish is watching me, and I want to cry out, “*I remembered! I really did this time!*” But he says in a quiet stream of bubbles, “*You forgot. You almost didn't this time.*” I want to run out of the dim room, away from the fish's stare that feels like ants all over me, but I will come back in a few tomorrows and cry a little to myself as the fish floats up with his awful eyes. The scariest thing is when the ghosts won't die.

– AVA ROHRBAUGH, 16,  
CHARLOTTE

## When you came on the wings of that kite

I thought we had forever; I have never been so wrong. I don't know how to tell you, so I pour my heart into song. You were the one that was part of me, the one I thought would never leave. But every day grows old, and each dark night unfolds. Those times you carried my light, when you came on the wings of that kite. A full circle is closing and I used to be so naive. Our kite just flew away and I don't know what to believe. We both know how the story ends, we laugh, lie, and say we're friends. But when we laugh, we rust, and when we lie, we lose trust. “*When dawn goes down to day, nothing gold can stay.*”

– GRETCHEN FITZGERALD, 15,  
BURLINGTON

## Kite

*Today is a good day to fly a kite.* Well, I don't really know; I've never flown a kite. But across the window of my shadow-soaked room, the clouds swim by in their gravity-defying ocean. Fast enough to imagine drifting aimlessly between them, with only a string to hold me from sinking into the sky.

– EMMETT JARVIS, 16,  
MONTPELIER

## Mind

I can build an empire – and no, not conquering land. I can craft in my mind, leave the physical behind, and build it entirely by hand. I can climb Mount Everest – and no, not like Edmund Hillary. Beyond the incline, through the depths of my mind, I'll gear up and head up the line. I can do just about anything, become the best type of me, if I focus my thoughts – do anything I want. There's nothing that I can't be.

– BELLA BAILEY, 17, MILTON

## The stars

I've always wanted to know who lives among the stars.

Whoever it is, I want them to know I think they're doing a pretty good job. Taking care of them is no easy job. There are countless stars, and someone up there keeps them all safe. Not a single star is ever missing. This person, whether they are galactically huge or just a normal person running around with a rag, individually cleans each star so that it sparkles throughout the night.

Before I go to bed, I look at the stars. Each one is squeaky clean and shines right back at me, as if knowing it needs to make its caretaker proud.

Some nights I gaze at the sky for hours, just hoping to catch a glimpse of the person that lives among the stars. I swear I've seen them move, especially when they accidentally bump a star a little too hard and it falls down the dark night sky.

– JACK SAVAS, 16,  
SOUTH BURLINGTON

## Take me somewhere

Take me somewhere where flowers never die and the butterflies dance between their petals. Where the stars twinkle in the night, and the sunsets are streaked with pastels. Let me escape from reality, let me leave my overwhelming schedule and the stressful news. Let me live in a world of kindness, not hate, where people laugh and dance, where people are kind. Take me there. I want to escape.

– ANNA DAUERMAN, 14,  
SHELBURNE

## HOW TO SUPPORT YWP

Young Writers Project is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that relies solely on grants and donations for support.

If you enjoy this weekly feature, please consider donating online at [youngwritersproject.org/support](http://youngwritersproject.org/support).

Or mail your gift to:  
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SPECIAL THANKS  
THIS WEEK

THE EMILY M. LYMAN  
FOUNDATION