

I trudge up the slanted slope, wiping sweat from my brow. The wind is chilly and grazes my face, leaving behind dry, sharp edges. I rub my hands together, attempting to regenerate some of the warmth I seem to have left behind back at the bottom of the slope. The weather today is somehow different. The shiver it leaves behind more intense. Of course, I've heard the rumors; the science attempts to explain both magic and biology. But up until now I've been too young to remember anything like this. It seems the wind has decided that sixteen years is enough of a standstill.

And the people have long since decided that my level head means I am the one who has to be selected to stop it. Right now I can already imagine the chaos the town is in. I've heard the stories. They were spoken to me like bedtime fairy tales as my parents tucked me in for the night. And our poor neighbor still hasn't recovered from the last time this bout came, well, about.

I squint against the sun as I try to gauge how much further I have left to climb. I wonder how much time is really left, how much of this hill I can traipse, until my luck runs out and I am too left to succumb to the mystical effects of this recurring wind phenomenon. We all succumb eventually.

My town just foolishly hopes that I can activate the device before I do as well. As I near the peak I review the instruction I had been given on what scientists believe to be how this works. The wind had originally been crafted and attached to the land from mages as "happy oxygen", built with such a positive force that upon its release those it touched would be granted a release from whatever troubles they were having for some sort of day of celebration. They failed to account for how magic interacts with a human body. The irony leaves a bitter taste in my mouth. I think the wind carries back a scream of anger from down below.