

## The Boy Who Wandered Away and Was Lost

Perhaps when shadows locked  
out the moonlight overhead,  
trees with dragon claws chased  
him deeper, further into strange  
and nameless nightmare mazes  
where lightning bugs as nightlights  
kept closet monsters lurking  
just out of sight behind tree trunks  
and cobwebs (although he could  
probably hear them breathing).

Maybe by the time morning  
stumbled through the trees,  
breadcrumbs had been snatched  
up by vultures and vampire bats,  
no memory stones connecting  
dots toward home. Perhaps he circled  
the same oaks until hoarse *Mommy!*'s  
and *HelpMe!*'s collapsed into trembling  
wide-eyed silences.

And maybe the stream hummed lullabies  
as branches tangled, strangled the moon  
until eyelids slipped shut and no longer  
sprung open at the sudden snap of a twig.