An afternoon in the Malvern area

Castlemorton Common is beautiful.

The hill I trot up to reach it is like a mystical tunnel, trees arching overhead, casting a cool green shadow on the ground below. The first bluebells have sprung up either site of the road, lilac heads crinkled at the edge of the petals like the puckered sleeves on a crisp, cotton summer dress. I love spring. The promise of warm weather whispers, but the fresh breeze lifts the weight of summer heat. The rough yellow common-grass carpet begins as soon as you exit the canopy, stretching out, ebbing and flowing with the ground like a lazy sea. The monochrome black and white of Galloway cattle ripples slowly as their brown eyes linger on any passerby. Clumps of trees grow closer and closer together until thick woodland curls around the base of the Malvern hills, interrupted occasionally by a lush green farm-field. The hills always seem meditative. Only one large eye open as they watch over the comings and goings of the area. Unlike the harsher, colder mountains of Wales, our hills are peaceful, their shoulders sloping down into the earth as they continue their cogitation. Even from here, spending the afternoon on a hack with my horse, I can see walkers atop British camp. They’re tiny pin shaped figures, making their way across the horizon, interrupting the sky. The sky is huge here. It surrounds us, from the hills to way back home behind gaps in the trees. In the evenings, swirls of pink, violet, peach and blood-orange weave in and out of the clouds, dancing to heavenly symphonies.

But right now, in the afternoon, the sky is the most intense, brilliant, magical blue.

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