While young, people create a place to go to escape the pressures of everyday life. This "special place" acts as a sort of safe haven, and gives them the chance to put everything in perspective and decide what to do. This place could be anywhere: under a bed, in a chair, or somewhere outdoors. *Mountain Landscape*, a painting by Frederic Edwin Church, shows a beautiful scene of nature at sunset. Church uses various techniques in different parts of the painting to get his point of escape across to the audience. In the foreground, Church uses different textures to contrast altered areas of the terrain. Church's use of color throughout the middle of the painting leads to a feeling of calmness and serenity. A mountain range forms a perfect horizon that reaches off into the distance of the painting. This painting shows the perfect place to go for an escape.

The painting represents a beautiful stretch of nature at the climax of twilight. The sky has turned from a bright blue to an almost blue-white color. It has been a gorgeous day, but clouds have rolled in, and only small patches of the sky can be seen. The clouds, absorbing the power of the sunset, have turned into a scattered sea of dark purples and grays. Along the horizon, small patches of sky are visible. A large mountain stands in the center of the painting, the evening sun bathing it in an amber light. The back of the mountain is lost in the shadows caused by the setting sun. A forest surrounds the mountain. Except for a small farm in a clearing, the landscape has been virtually untouched by civilization. The fields are smooth, perfect squares, a contrast to the uneven forest. A large lake in the foreground reflects the sky in the glass-like smoothness of the water. At the edge of the lake, where the water and the forest meet, a waterfall adds a splash of color. The trees at the edge have lost their color and have faded into either black or dark green. At the center of the lake is a solitary boat with an individual in it. This boat gives the impression of solitude or seclusion. This seclusion from everything offers a form of escape to the boater. On the water, he or she may be reflecting on the past day's events or upcoming happenings in the person's life.

Church uses a difference in textures to get a feeling of relaxation in the painting. In the foreground, dead trees and rough boulders are visible. These images provide a contrast to the rest of the painting. Located behind the rocks and trees is a placid lake. The lake is huge and provides relief to the surrounding plant and animal life. The lake offers an escape from heat, drought, and tension for a long workday. In the boat an individual sits absorbing the tranquility that the lake has to offer. The size of the boat, compared to the surrounding terrain, is insignificant. The painting focuses on nature being an escape, not the person seeking an escape through nature.
The feeling of relaxation and peacefulness comes up in various ways in this painting. The lake has much of the focus but the waterfall feeding into the lake coaxes the senses into a deeper feeling of peace. As the water falls, it is divided into two main streams that cascade into the water below. The color of the waterfall erupts out of the dark recesses of the forest surrounding it. The forest covers the land so much that specific details of it cannot be seen. The forest merely outlines the general shape of the land, the rolling hills, and deep valleys. Then in a clearing, the makings of a small farm is seen. This could be the cause of the need for escape. Farming is rigorous work and a release of tension and stress is required. These surroundings help to take away the pressures and problems of daily life. More convincing yet, the mountain is peaceful in its own way, particularly by its color and shading. With the sun almost set, the soft orange glow of the sun reflects off the mountain. The shadow of the mountain hides one side from the outside world. The shadow acts as a shield capable of preventing any outside influences from penetrating.

In the background of the painting, a collection of mountains forms a horizon. The sky is filled with light, puffy clouds that have been molded into an almost perfect blanket. Throughout the day the sky has been worn out by the sun, softening it into a bleached blue. Some clouds, reflecting the amber light of the setting sun, give the impression of coolness, a type of relief from the threat of the scorching sun. Their colors supply the air with a cool and refreshing feel. The clouds offer shade and comfort from a hard day's work.

*Mountain Landscape* leaves the viewer with a new sense of refreshment. Jane Austen, an English novelist, best sums up the emotions aroused by such a painting: "To sit in the shade on a fine day, and look upon verdure is the most perfect refreshment.” Frederic Church has created an environment suitable for relaxation and reflection. By using different colors and textures, Church has created a "special place" for his audience to go. Church's painting shows the audience that a special place is not hard to find. This special place is here to ease away the pressures and troubles of everyday life. This painting shows a want, a need for that escape.