

In Memory of My Friends the Trees

By Maggie Boone

In the early morning, I stood on my deck and listened as birds sang their songs of joy. They seemed so happy to be alive, ready to enjoy a new day. Some stood proudly in view while others hid within the trees' leaves and branches in the nearby woods. Later I watched squirrels bury nuts you had dropped for them. When they were tired, I saw them scamper up your trunk to the safety of their nests, hidden from predators by your canopy of leaves. Trees standing strong and proud.

In the afternoon, I hid from the sun in the shelter of your shade. When I was tired, I would lean against you and rest. On stormy days, your leaves made a rustling noise as the wind and rain began to march towards my house. I watched as a strong gust made you sway and dance. Deer came to you for shelter from the storm and as dusk drew near, shelter from predators. They nibbled on your leaves and stopped to lap water from a nearby stream. Trees dancing and providing shelter.

When darkness came, I sat outside and looked up at the stars and listened to the music of bullfrogs as their sounds traveled across the road from a neighbor's pond. I heard conversations between owls watching for prey from your limbs and sounds of unknown creatures roaming through the woods. Every now and then a hickory nut would make its own unique sound as it fell to the ground. Trees silently keeping watch in the darkness.

One morning a new sound came from the woods, loud rumbling equipment, chainsaws, and men's voices. The woodland paradise beside me was being clear-cut. The trees remained silent and stood tall and proud, unafraid of the blades heading towards them. I watched with tears running down my face as my friends began to fall to the ground. I did not own these trees or the land where they had thrived, but I loved them. The trees had given me so much and I could only stand helpless, unable to protect or save them. The trees were gone.