

With Respect,

Old Tree.....

Out there, on a hill, was an old Pine tree.

Most of the others thought it wasn't all THAT different. After all it was just a pine tree. It had grown there a bit longer than a lot of the other pines.

Maybe a little straighter than some , but it didn't stand out as special.

As the seasons came and went, the pine withstood the Winter storms, the Spring rush of growth, the drying winds of Summer and Fall's retreat into slumber once again.

No one thought of it as being much different than any of the other pines out there on the hill. It did what most people required of a Pine tree. It grew and made cones. Some of which held seeds.

A few seeds of the pine, dropped, sprouted and those new sprouts began THEIR journey up as the old pine tree had done.

As pine trees go, it continued being a pine tree about as good as any old tree could have been. However, there was one thing that, if you knew about it, was different from the other Pines.

IF, you got very close to the old tree, it would talk.

And, oh my, what stories it could tell !

Stories of "Those days" and of "Those people" "Those Storms" , the tree had known. and Its limbs would shake with the laughter remembered.

The bark of it would crinkle with humor. Sometimes the stories might be serious and then the Pine would lower its voice and share them with what seemed to be, just you alone.

It was a good old Pine tree and there wasn't a soul around that hill, that didn't count themselves blessed to have known it.

As is all too often the truth, many of us had journeyed away from those hills long ago. We didn't get many chances to see that old tree putting on more inner rings each year.

We never had the fulfillment that comes with just leaning against it to rest, or to share our private thoughts with it.

Sadly, we who were rooted on some other hill in the world's forests, never had many of those moments.

But even though we were far away, we always knew that that Old Pine stood there ready.

When occasionally we did get to reach out, touch it and become Tree Huggers, we always went away with our hearts full of the "Pitch" of family bonds holding us tight

Soft Splinters of love and knowledge pricking our souls. We kept them all as our private treasures.

The work of the old pine tree finally ended. Its heart wood weakened and crumbling,, it fell.

The Pine left one last gift to the forest on the hill when it downed,it will let the sun warm the grounds it once kept safe in shade.

We've all heard the question, "If NO one is there to hear it, when a tree falls in the forest, IS there SOUND ? ".

Well, I can only say that when the Old Pine tree on the hill fell, Oh yes, there WAS sound.

And it's a sound that will echo through the hills and over the valleys and into hearts of everyone who knew the old tree.....

Forever !

Ralph E. AhseIn

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