

# Nymph

I remember when the soil embraced me and wrapped me in its warmth; when the rains first fell and quenched my thirst; when my roots first grew to taste the world around me. I dug deep-- it was natural but then I began to sprout upwards. I felt light. Oh Sun! He was magnificent, so bright and warm. As I grew, I realized my hunger... but with no mouth what could I eat? Sun fed me; he provided as I stretched from the rich, damp earth. Years passed and I became harder, darker, taller until I towered above my friends: the flowers and ferns; the beetles and butterflies; the hedgehogs and humans. I remember the spring of my debut. I was glorious with my flowers in bloom and a crown of nests resting on my head. More bees visited me than the queen. They helped themselves to my nectar and flew off drunkenly to their hive.

In the summer I met a boy. He was a small fleshy thing, with a ruddy face and messy hair, and a laugh that rivaled the robins. He came every day to see me, sometimes he brought books or toys or other fleshy ones. Eventually he visited less frequently-- I didn't mind too much. My other friends were still there. They had children and their children had children. I remember having children of my own but not in the way my friends did. I remember the spring when I absolutely blossomed and the following summer where my branches grew heavier. I remember the wonderful orbs that shone on my branches like jewels in the sun- my little ones. I knew they couldn't stay, that there was no room on this forest floor for us to grow, so I let them go. I let my friends escort them to clearer pastures so they may live but I ached for I would never see them grow to Sun.

In my old age I saw much of a floor I thought I never would, Earth looked so cold-- so naked-- without her coat of verdance. Sun was often choked out by the clouds or black that hung low. I couldn't find my friends anymore and the silence was a miasma, infecting me and the life I once knew. I remember the strange and bright markings on Spruce and Pine; the unnatural colors that stained their trunks; the unfamiliar larger fleshy creatures that dragged them on loud metal boxes. I remember feeling the mark on me. I remember seeing the familiar but older face of the boy who laughed like robins. I remember being carved into and felled- the humiliation as I was stripped of my crown and armor. I can't remember how he looked at me; whether we were still friends; if we were ever friends. Do friends take other friends to never be seen again? Do friends carve in my trunk their names? Do friends drive into my soft core spigots for my blood?