

Trees at night

BY: Talya H. 6th grade,

Mrs. Davlin-Buchanan

Thick clouds hovered above the ground, the moon's light invisible to the naked eye. Lightning struck, thunder clapping close behind. Swirling winds howled as I sat in my bed, unable to sleep. My window panes hung awry, a crack in my ceiling dripping water. Sitting up, I unlatched my window frame and raised my head up to the opened window. Caked with dust, the window screens shook and wobbled. A subtle mist brushed against my face, my eyes failing to see through the storm. I was about to lay down when a tree branch swung out in the wind. Before I could duck my head, I felt a sharp pain strike me in the nose. The tree branch smacked me across my face and threw me into my bed frame. As soon as I hit the floor, I was out like a light.

I could only remember bits and pieces of my dream. I remember seeing a tree, a broken clock, my dad, an uninhabited meadow, a knife, a grave, and myself. I did not know what to make of these clues, but I knew they were there for a reason. Everything is here for a reason. I'm here for a reason, but it might not be long before I'm not here anymore. That must've been what those clues were trying to tell me! My time is almost up, and only the people I love can know, but why was there a tree? What did that have to do with anything?

Thoughts raced through my mind. My hands grew numb and my toes started to tingle. I opened my eyes quickly to take a peek around the room. It felt like someone was watching me. Like someone taped a camera onto my wall, and was watching my life unravel as if it were a horror movie. Paranoid, I closed my eyes slowly, but that was a mistake. In the back of my head I saw dripping blood running in thin rivers down my face. I didn't care about anything except getting out of my house. It wasn't safe; I could feel it through the chill in the air. My heart pounded, my eyelids blinking rapidly to get the image out of my head. Something was out to get me. My conscience assured me of it. I shot up out of bed and grabbed my robe. I jumped into my shoes and tossed away my blanket. A flash of lightning made me stumble backwards, water pouring out of the leak in my ceiling. I knew I had to leave soon.

I dashed through my room and down the stairs. I was practically out the door when the house light flickered on. A dark, shadowy figure moved toward me. I shielded my eyes as I felt his hand reach out and grab my shoulder. His grip tightened around my clavicle. He squeezed tighter, applying great force.

"Carlos, why are you leaving? And why are you bleeding?" His face was a stern, cold statue.

"Dad, I have to leave. A tree hit me, it's a sign. I'm not safe here." Tears started to gather in my eyes as my voice caught in my throat. A silence was set upon us for a long time.

"I knew it wasn't safe Carlos, I knew from the beginning. I was just hoping—" He started to cry, breaking the silence. "I was just hoping you wouldn't find out."

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“Find out what?” I asked, my voice quavering, my stomach in knots of fear.

“They don’t want you here.” His voice trembled; his palms sweating enough to fill a bathtub. A strike of lightning burst through the windows. Thunder echoed off the pavement.

“Go son! You need to go now!” He screamed through the house. His eyes were the source of his river of tears. I turned the doorknob, and heaved myself into the depths of the night. I scurried onto the sidewalk, and stopped in the tunnel of trees reaching out to snatch me. They clawed at my pajamas, skinning my face as I tried to fight my way through. My dad had told me that “*they*” don’t want me here. Who was “*they*”?

A tree branch grasped my sleeve. I frantically pulled at my shirt, when I made a realization. This is what the tree must’ve represented in my dream! If so, two parts were still missing. What did the meadow and the knife resemble?

The trees grabbed at my throat, creating gashes in my neck that would never recover. A cloud of pain rained over my body, fear emerging from inside my troubled self. I felt all the color drain from my face as a memory occurred in my mind. Our yard had always been an empty meadow. When we bought our house, there weren’t trees in our yard. Last week, there weren’t trees in our yard. Yesterday, there weren’t trees in our yard. This morning, there weren’t trees in our yard; but now, there are trees. The trees were the evil I was running from. *They* were watching me, convincing me that I wouldn’t be safe. Plants so unsuspected, so innocent.

They grasped my ankles with their over stretched limbs, tugging at my hair with god-like strength. All color started to fade as I found breathing a massive challenge. My arms fell limp at my sides, my mouth and throat struggling to make out the words “help”. Numbness crept to my face, large throbbing pains taking hold of me. I was hanging on to the little bit of life I had left by a thread. The knife was the last puzzle piece. I opened my mouth, about to cry for help, when I felt something jab into my brainstem. Blackness filled my eyes; all feeling in my body had vanished, forever.

As my corpse rots in the ground regret still pulses through my veins on earth. I never did figure out the answer to the most important question; where *did* those trees come from?