

The Maple

Adrian Daeger
Butler University

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The Maple

Adrian Daeger

Beginning my ascent into the grand bungalow, early-morning dew speckles my lips in sweet serenity. I nestle into the lap of my craggy, maple seat, bark entwining its fingers, holding me. Every inch of the maple tree is a scrapbook, housing days of gleeful laughter, hours of Choose your Own Adventure books, warm hugs only matched by the coziest of blankets, and love. Velvet streams of sunlight weave through long tresses of branches and bathe my mousy-brown hair as the words of R.L Stine and Encyclopedia Brown gaze upon my sun-freckled face. Adorning my surroundings, sweet petals fall and grape hyacinths dot the roots of the Maple in a cornucopia of color. The glazed honey sun rays streak the branches cradling me. Time is trivial in my treasured tree, and hours pass without my knowledge.

Caressing my skin, 8 PM summer breezes carry the crisp scent of freshly mown grass mingling with the leftover balmy, daytime air. Lush, emerald stalks of grass tower from the damp evening ground below me, beckoning for fireflies to emerge from their concealed comfort. Cicadas rest their legs above me, gently humming their songs. I turn the page as the last droplet of sunset fades into the horizon, the sky becoming creamy cotton candy, sweet enough to taste. A yawn escapes from my mouth. A yawn of contentment. The dark draws near, and time takes me away from my bungalow. Bidding it “Good Night,” I glimpse back at the empty Maple like a frame without a photo and begin my descent into my bedroom.

Wind whispers in my petite ears from my open window as I crawl beneath the white cotton sheets, drifting slowly into sleep. Rising to sunlight streaming in my window, like a mother reaching to her child, I gaze through the blinds. The Maple stands tall, reaching out to me, calling me home.