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A Boy and His Tree

By Cecilia Stowell

Chapter 1

I am a Tree.

I am a maple tree. Every year people come and drain me of my syrup. Do you know how this happens? They stick a metal spout into my thick dark brown bark. Then the golden brown colored syrup comes dripping out into a big bucket. When people do this it drains my energy because my syrup gives me the energy I need. When people take my syrup, my leaves turn from a lush green in the spring; to different shades of yellows, oranges, and reds; then later in the season burgundy; then my leaves all fall off and I go to sleep for the winter.

There are two particular people that come to me every single year to take my syrup, a father and his son, the boy is named Bill, and his father is called Joe. My leaves are already orange, and I don't want to go to sleep yet, so I am going to tell Bill and Joe to not take my syrup but, trees aren't supposed to talk to humans but I did I yelled, "Hey, stop that!"

Bill and Joe both jumped and yelled, "who said that?"

"Me, I said that!"

"You, the tree?!?" exclaimed Bill doubtfully.

"Yes! Me, the tree!" I shouted "I have something to tell

you. I don't want you to take my syrup because, when you take my syrup it drains my energy. My syrup helps me live because it keeps my leaves lush and green. Just like how your blood keeps you alive. My syrup keeps me alive. You see my leaves there? They are already orange!" I cried out.

"Is this why trees lose their leaves?" Bill asked.

"Yes it is!" pronounced the tree.

"Whoa! I never thought of that," Bill said in wonder.

"Let's go tell Grandpa what happened and see if he knows anything," Joe said

As they walked away Bill said to his dad "I don't want to take the tree's syrup! I don't want the tree to die; I want it to come back with the same strength that it had in the spring."

"Ok Bill, we don't have to get the syrup," his dad said in a reassuring voice.

Chapter 2, Bill and Joe

Bill and Joe left and went to see Joe's Grampa Bill's Great Grampa. He asked them how they thought leaves change color. He replied, "It's because when it gets colder out the leaves fall and die because it's too cold for them to stay alive." But Grandpa had a suspicion the tree had talked to them because the tree and talked to his dad and him when he was a child. So he had told them a fake story, which everybody believes, because first he wanted them to figure out the rest of what the tree is going to teach them.

Bill thought Grandpa didn't know about the tree so, they went back to the tree and told what Grandpa said then the tree said, "That's what people who trees haven't talked to trees think because trees aren't supposed to talk to people." Afterwards they went back to Grandpa and told him what the tree said and how the tree and talked to them. After that Grandpa suggested they all go visit the tree, so he could see for himself.

So they all went back to the tree. The tree saw Grandpa and said, "I know you!" in a wilting voice, "I spoke to you when you were a boy, the tree continued.

"Yes you did," said, Grandpa.

"I want to stay alive longer," the tree begged.

Bill jumped to say, "How can we help!?"

"You can put fertilizer on my roots to see if that helps, also can you wait until I go to sleep for the winter to take my syrup?" the tree said as it gasped for air. Then Bill ran off to get the fertilizer.

Bill arrived back at the tree with the fertilizer. He poured it all over the roots of the tree. He hoped it would work, but there was no use. Most of the leaves had already fallen to the ground. Bill stood there upset with his eyes starting to water while he watched the last of the trees leaves float down on the cold dry ground in front of him. His dad patted his back and said, "Everything is at one point in its life happy, lush. Or alive and then sometimes things are sad, sleepy, or gray, but remember your tree will be back in the spring," his father told Bill in a calm sincere tone.

“Your right Dad,” Bill said, a little peppier.

“Let’s go bud you have school tomorrow.”

Chapter 3, Realization

The next morning Bill got up to go to school and looked out the window of his bedroom, noticing all the trees asleep for the winter on the way to school, on the bus, he noticed all the trees asleep for the winter everywhere he went, there were no trees that were still alive.

Later that day, in school, he was on a nature walk for science and noticed all the trees that were alive. They weren’t like maple trees though; they were taller and had needles instead of leaves. They were even green. When he got back into the classroom, he asked his teacher what all those trees were.

She said, “Those are called pine trees. They....” and Bill ran off. He ran to the library to use a computer to research if you can get maple syrup from pine trees. The Internet said mainly the syrup we eat comes from maple trees, not pine trees, because the syrup in pine trees tastes bitter. Bill realized that Pine Trees don’t lose their needles because people don’t get maple syrup from them. He ran home to tell his dad what he had learned.

When he told his dad said, “That makes sense! Why don’t you go tell your grandfather” Then, Bill ran to go tell his Grampa.

Chapter 4,

Look what I found out!

When he got to his grandpa's house, he went to the door, while he was eating lunch. He told his grandpa his discovery and his grandpa said, "I discovered the tree too when I was your age."

"What do you mean?"

Bill said "What I mean is I discovered the same thing when I was a kid. So did Gamma."

"I didn't know that" Bill responded in wonder.

After he was done visiting with his grandpa. He wanted to see if the tree was still alive by any miracle. He went past the house, down the hill and into the woods. He saw the tree and ran to give him a hug. He felt the branches of the tree wrapping around his back, he felt comforted. He pulled away and said happily, "You're still here!"

"Yes," the tree said, exasperated.

"I found out why you lose your leaves and pine trees don't"

"Why?" the tree asked.

"It's because people don't get syrup out of those trees."

"Ok," and that was the last word the tree said until spring.

Later after Bill got home that night, his dad asked, "Is there anything you learned from the adventure of the past two days?"

"I learned about the pine trees and how they don't lose their leaves. I also learned that everything has its cycle and

sometimes things are happy. And sometimes things are sad,” explained Bill

“Good, I am glad you learned something.”

After Joe put Bill to sleep, he fell asleep dreaming about next spring. How he was going to help people learn about the tree and not take the syrup too early. The next morning Bill and Joe and Grandpa went down to the tree and got syrup now that the tree was asleep for the winter. Then they went back to the house and had some pancakes with syrup from the tree and talked about how they were going to help the tree stay alive longer in the Spring.