



King's High School

Junior Creative Writing
Spring Anthology:
Trees

The Trapping Tree

by Lola



When I came across this tree, something was different. I had seen many other trees before but just not one like this. This tree was tall, old and had the most beautiful glistening green leaves that I had ever seen before. I sat down beside the tree for hours that day and wondered how old it was, when it was planted and what it had been through. Day after day, I went to visit the tree trying to figure out more about it. What if it had seen extraordinary things happen or what if it sat in the park lonely for years. All I could think about was the tree, it was in my mind so much that I couldn't focus in my day-to-day life. So, that Saturday I made up my mind, the 'tree obsession' must come to an end. I was going to find out that tree's past. Throughout that week, all I could think about was how I was going to find some information about the tree.

Saturday morning, 6AM I got up and started looking outside and asked people what they knew. For hours and hours I was searching but had no luck. When the clock chimed 9PM, I knew it was over. I was still determined to find out about the tree, and knew I wasn't going to give up, no matter what. During the week, I was still visiting the tree. But I just couldn't get my mind over the fact of how there were no newspaper articles, or any word about the tree. That must mean something, mustn't it?

As luck would have it, a bit of good fortune was on my side. I spotted a small sign on a bench near the tree that was covered in moss. When I scraped it off, it said 'Trapping tree. Donated by the Jones family in 1948.' I couldn't contain my excitement when I found it and I immediately knew that I was on the right path to finding out more about this 'Trapping Tree'.

Soon after this, I went to the local library to see if they had any old records for the Jones family. Luckily, the librarian knew of the Jones family, or should I say was part of the Jones family. She told me she was called Dorothy Jones! I asked her all about a Trapping Tree but unfortunately, she had no idea what I was talking about. But she did tell me about a story that happened in 1950 which her granny had told. She said that someone called Sarah Jones went missing one night after school and the case had never been solved. But how would that help? And why had her granny been telling that story for decades?

I was just thinking about it when a thought occurred in my head. Trapping Tree; like it traps stuff? Had I discovered something new? If I was right, goodness knows what could be trapped in it, like a person maybe! Could Sarah Jones possibly be trapped in the tree?

I was instantly on my way to the library to tell Dorothy. She was stunned when I told her but oddly she believed me. She did say Sarah loved the outdoors so it would make sense if she was in a tree, but how? And how would we prove it? But I had a plan...

If the tree trapped Sarah, we should let it trap us I said to Dorothy. Dorothy wasn't too sure. We were almost guaranteed to find Sarah, I was certain of it and I was hopeful we might even be featured in the news and on tv. With my excellent persuasion skills Dorothy said yes. All that was left now was trying to figure out how to get 'trapped'. After a few failed attempts, I successfully walked into the tree and was amazed where I had ended up.

Funky music was playing, girls in poofy dresses, boys in suits. People having a great time. I had travelled to the 1950s! There was a massive ballroom with an even bigger cheering crowd. I was having an awesome time, but I knew I would have to leave soon so, just as I was about to leave, I stayed for one last dance. An amazing couple performed the Jive. After they had finished their spotless routine, I asked for their signature. Pete Rollins and Sarah Jones, the piece of paper said. At the top of my lungs I shouted "Sarah Jones, the missing Sarah Jones"! She had no idea what I was talking about, so I asked her if she recognised any names Dorothy had told me. She recognised them all.

It turns out Sarah had accidentally fallen into the Trapping Tree and loved the ballroom so much she never thought about leaving and her memory of life outside the tree faded over the years. After a while we left the ballroom and met Dorothy. She was so pleased to see Sarah. And the best news is we still go to the ballroom every weekend! PS: We made it on TV.

A Crocodile's Vision

by Rhiannon

She stared wonderingly at me. I felt safe for once. I've never felt this way towards a human before. It was weird. I felt like sitting there for ages with my foot in the water and her warm hand gently touching my back. Sometimes I wonder what goes on in the human head especially when they come into my territory. They often make such a racket scaring the locals like my friend the pangolin who is so secretive and endangered none of the humans know how many there are left.

CRASH! A deafening cacophony fills my tiny ears and I slide into the water from shock. I feel a bit safer here at least I know I won't get squashed by whatever helpless tree is being brought down today. I glance back over to where I and the girl were sitting and just as suddenly as she arrived, she vanished again. After a few minutes of constant crashes, it finally feels normal, with me guarding my territory.

On that note, I realise I haven't introduced myself yet. My name is Daisy the Philippine crocodile. I live in this tropical river full of biodiversity or at least it is for now. Every now and then people come in boats or on foot stumbling over the different terrain often just to get a glimpse of one of the critically endangered species such as me and the pangolin. I'm always weary of the boats as sometimes they are not full of tourists. Some are filled with humans who don't just want to make memories and take photos, they come out to hunt us to reduce human-animal conflict.

As night falls, I go and take shelter in amongst the roots of a tree. It may not be usual crocodile behaviour, but it makes me feel safe for the time being at least no one would think to find me. I can't imagine what it would be like to not have the safety of the tree's roots. I close my eyes and I think back to the girl with the warm hands. I realize maybe there are a few of the humans who are good after all. Maybe there are some who could help save me, my friends and my habitat from extinction.

An Orangutan's Words

by Rhiannon

My name is Batu and I'm a Tapanuli orangutan. My forest is in danger. People keep coming and chopping down my trees. I've never felt safe in this haven. Every night I worry about whether my tree that I choose to sleep in will be chopped down or not. We might be intelligent enough to know over 150 words in sign language and understand spoken English but that doesn't mean we are able to fix our problems by ourselves.

Humans! I hear them. They are coming this way. I hope they aren't going to start working on that Hydropower project that was said to have work started on three years ago but was then postponed due to critically endangered species such as me. I have learnt over the years to not trust these relatives of mine as they hunt my species and take away my trees.

That's when they saw me, they gazed at me until eventually getting out their guns. Then I knew not to trust these two individuals in particular. Occasionally, there are a few conservationists who come and make an estimate of how many orangutans are left but I don't see them very often. I always hope that the humans are conservationists or just don't mean any harm but unfortunately that is not always the case.

I go and sit up in a tree eating some edible fruit and think to myself. The fruit explodes with flavours as I bite into it and eventually swallow. My favourite sort of fruit. Then I think back to the unfriendly people, all the commotion over a Hydropower project. All I can say is I hope, I hope me and my species and all the other creatures on this island have a future. A bright future.

A Tamandua's World

by Rhiannon

Costa Rica. This is the place to be. The sky is blue, the trees are climbable, and the people are almost under control. It's like paradise. I barely have a care in the world. Even humans building roads doesn't affect us too much. As long as you stay reasonably clear of the humans while they do their building work. Once they finish the road, they build some bridges for us, this way we can get across the road, and it creates something known as wildlife corridors.

I just remembered, I'm Oreo the tamandua. Some would say my life is perfect and when I think about it, I suppose it is. BOOM! Sounds like one of the cars have a bad engine. That's their loss. Look here comes another car attempting to pull over to admire and explore the wondrous forests of Costa Rica. These wildlife corridors are amazing, I

wonder who came up with the idea. Sometimes I like to sit up here watching over the vehicles and I think, I think about where they might be going or why they are travelling in a weird contraption. It would be fair to say I don't see the point in them but at least when they build on their world, they provide new havens for us to replace anything destroyed.

This is the best life you could ever have. All the local animals agree. We all know the way of the forest and how to tolerate the humans or at least nearly everyone does. Unfortunately, this is where I leave you. With everything well and my future bright, for now. With the trees alive and happy and everything protected. As I think back to other species and habitats that aren't so fortunate and perhaps one day, they won't be in so much danger.

A Robin's Dream

by Rhiannon

Snow falls on my beak. I wake up and shake it off. The sounds of the other birds surround me. I look down from the tall branches. The snow shimmers and glitters in the bright sunlight. Each and every branch was covered with snow with my footprints distinctly visible. This is my favourite time of year. The time of year when people send cards with us on. The time of year when people think about others. It's just the best.

My name is Rose, and I live near a guinea pig hutch, in England. I love it when it snows, being able to feel it underfoot. I love to bounce around along a branch or two. It's the best of things. Though every day I worry. Not about me or my species, but about trees. My trees and all the trees, no matter how many animals live in them. Endangered or not.

All the trees in the world need protecting. Now more than ever. But as a robin all I can do is not much. That is why I'm talking to you now, or at least I think I am. It's always hard to tell if you humans can understand what we are saying which is why we don't do it every day. If it's going to change than you need to change it. Why make paper out of trees? Paper can be made out of all sorts of things such as elephant or horse dung. This would also make it more sustainable.

If I as a robin could have one dream it would be for trees to not be threatened with extinction anymore. For the animals like Batu the Orangutan and Daisy the Crocodile to feel safe. Imagine if there was no more extinction or deforestation. And now I have done my bit. I will fly off to get my mealworms and never forget that trees can change the globe.



Trees

by Izzy

This tree is delicate it provides much life,
But it keeps getting damaged by an axe or maybe a knife.

Look through your mind and search through your head,
But think before you become the reason its dead.

I am warning you now, I won't warn you twice,
Listen to me and hear my advice.

If you dare hurt or kill any trees,
I shall send you buckling to your knees.

The Lorax shall come chasing you through the night,
And in his hand, he shall carry a knife.

For whatever you do to the innocent trees,
He will do back to you gladly.

I am warning you here and now in advance,
I warn you I will not give you another chance.

Gone

by Izzy

One girl standing by remains of a tree,
One girl crying on her knees.
One girl with tears running down her face,
One girl looking at a terrible fate.
One girl with a broken heart,
One girl who felt like she got shot by a dart.
One girl standing by remains of a tree,
One girl who felt like she lost her family.
One girl who had no voice or say,
On whether they cut down the tree that day.
One girl who had been put aside,
While they took away a big part of her life.
One girl heartbroken and kneeling on the floor,
One girl who couldn't deal with this anymore.

Time to forget

by Izzy

Here I stand tall and brave,
This will be my very last day.
I have protected and helped you in your life,
But you need to be brave and stand up and fight.
Oh, little girl standing by me,
I will not live but you can help other trees.
I believe in you, no matter what,
I know you are great oh what a heart you've got.
But there is no need to cry, not here, not now,
You will be amazing not maybe or somehow.
You will be a saviour to many trees,
So come on and get up of your knees.
Wipe you tears no need to cry,
Come on get up, it's time for me to die.
There will be more just like me,
So, it's time to forget and live happily.

A close-up photograph of a squirrel with grey and brown fur climbing a tree trunk. The squirrel is positioned on the left side of the frame, with its body angled towards the right. Its front paws are gripping the rough bark of the tree. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting a forest setting. The lighting is bright, highlighting the texture of the squirrel's fur and the bark.

The Squirrel

by Jessica

There was a scent in the air. But it was not just any scent. It was a glorious one, one that made my heart race, my ears prick up, and my tail twitch. It was coming from up the tree, a few centimetres to the left. I knew, immediately, what I must do. I began to climb, silently, slyly, and swiftly, up the tree's chestnut trunk, following the scent as I made progress. As the I got closer, the scent became more and more attractive. Excitement flooded through my body.

The dreaded noise of human footsteps sounded in the distance, followed by that of a door sharply shutting. I was almost there, I could feel the smooth metal on my paws, the scent was so strong I could taste it, the glory filled my lungs. But all of a sudden, "Shoo, squirrel!". I couldn't help it. I let go of the tree, scared of the noise that was a human's shout. I was trembling on the ground, thoughts of some lost glory going through my head. I scurried away, as fast as my tiny legs could carry me.

Oak of Claws

by Felicity

The silvery cat slipped through the outstretched branches of the old oak, putting on a burst of speed as she spotted a small squirrel darting along the broad branch. The cat made a huge leap and landed squarely on the struggling creature. There was a satisfying crunch as the squirrel went limp in her sharp jaws. "Nice catch, Rain!" called the fat ginger tom perched upon a fence nearby. Rain whipped round "I didn't know I had an audience, Ginger." She said smoothly, dropping the squirrel in the hollow where she lived.

"Oh, no. I didn't come to watch you hunt. I came to warn you." The tom said, his expression darkening. Rain leapt to the ground, and scaled the fence, sitting beside Ginger, concern glinting in her eyes. "They plan to cut down the Claw Oak." Ginger said darkly, gesturing to the huge tree that Rain lived. "They?" Said Rain, trying to compose herself. Ginger stiffened "The Human-kind." He mewed nervously. Rain stood up, her tail bushy and back arched, bristling "I won't let them cut down my home without putting up a fight."

That night Rain couldn't settle as she curled up in the hollow of the oak, comfortably lined with soft, fluffy moss. Was she going to lose the tree she called home? She had said she would put up a fight but she didn't quite know what she could do to stop these giant creatures. The thought exhausted her and she soon fell soundly to sleep, all thoughts of the oak's fate stored away, ready to bug her tomorrow.

The feline awoke the next morning, a sense of foreboding whirling deep in her stomach. She sat bolt upright as she remembered the beloved oak's fate, to crash down to the ground, gone and forgotten. How on earth would she save it? She saw no way.



Corrupted Willow

by Juliet

The shadowed, towering figure in the distance slowly swayed back and forth in the icy breeze. I couldn't take my eyes off it; I felt as if I was under a trance as I took a few unsteady steps towards it, whilst it began whispering to me. Its manipulating voice flooding my brain with unpleasant thoughts, making my fingers shakily close into the palms of my hands. I stepped closer, closer, closer, until I found myself only ten feet away from it. I was just about to do something, something which I had no control over, but it gave me a horrifying sensation and I suddenly forced my head to whip back around. I broke into a run, knowing it was time to leave. Whether I would come back or not, I don't know.

"I'm home, mum," were the few small words I was able to utter after the not so pleasant encounter.

"Hey hun! Peanut-butter on toast tonight?"

"Sure."

I sprinted up the stairs, wishing that my heart would stop threatening to cease its beating. When I made it from what seemed like a long, tiring journey up the stairs I unconsciously walked towards the window, staring out in the direction of the tree. The horrifying sensation which I experienced earlier did not end, and for a while I just stood by the window expressionless. Once sanity visited once again I flopped onto my bed and forced my eyes shut.

"Go to bed.." I'd whisper over and over. But every time I began drifting off the traumatising image of earlier would yet again enter my mind. But I couldn't. I couldn't go to sleep, so I didn't try. I lay for hours, staring at the wall, begging the image not to come back. I felt like I was slowly slipping into madness.

But somehow, I woke up the next morning having slept at least an hour. I don't think I have ever been so glad to see the sun rise.

The next day I rode my bike over to Jaya's house, but the back of my neck kept pricking me as goosebumps covered my body. I imagined that when I arrived that Jaya would have her suspicions, being a best friend... just act cool, I told myself.

When I arrived at her small, white porch with chips of paint dotted here and there I rang the bell. I looked around at the nice surroundings of countryside; long, healthily green grass; small animals scuttling around the fields; a huge blue sky. I always envied where Jaya lived - it was so special to me, with all the memories.

It had been at least 40 seconds, and I was still standing there waiting. Until I saw something in the window. Something that was not Jaya.

Next thing I know, I had most likely blacked out. Because I woke up tied to a chair, and I didn't remember what it was that I saw in Jaya's window. But it wasn't her, and it wasn't any of her relatives. Before I realised where I was, with an unpleasant shock I processed my circumstances. I was tied to a chair, completely unable to move, with a large piece of material tied around my mouth. Then I looked around... and almost threw up.




The tree loomed over me and I suddenly felt my insides burn. The tree's roots glowed a dark red, and the unpleasant voices in my head grew so loud it was unbearable. I screamed... and then, blackness.



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