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### How The Tree Found Her Roots

When creation was new and man was unmade, the Tree roamed about the world just as the rest of creation did. In many ways, the Tree looked as the most beautiful of women do today, with a tall, delicate frame, and hair that draped far down her back. Of course, her hair was rather leafy and her skin rather rough, but she still had no shortage of suitors that were enraptured by her beauty. She, however, was much harder to impress, and didn't even consider a man unless he had fine looks of his own to entice her with.

The first of such men was the Brook, who captured the young Tree's heart with his incessant babbling and playful spirit. The Brook, however, was turbulent to a fault, and hastily decided that the Tree was not worth his time. Despite her attraction to the handsome Brook, the Tree had no lasting attachment to him, and decided to move on. The Tree's second suitor was the Wind, who softly whispered sweet nothings to the Tree as he first passed her way. The Wind had a mysterious air about him, and often had a warm, pleasant disposition. On occasion, however, the Wind suddenly grew tempestuous, and the couple fought fiercely. Eventually, the Wind grew to be indifferent, and decided to move on (as the Wind often does). The Tree, though upset, again found that she had no attachment to her lover, and did not grieve his loss. The Tree's third lover was the stone, who had a course disposition, and was, frankly, rather dense. The Tree, unfortunately, could easily see past the Stone's faults in favor of his looks and his strength. The two were companions for quite some time, but when the stone's chiseled features weathered away, the tree lost interest in him, and decided to move on. One day, shortly after her separation from the Stone, the Tree noticed that her bark was beginning to shed. The Tree was alarmed. After years of being the lovely, youthful Tree, her age was finally beginning to show. The tree sank to her knees (for again, she still had knees at this time), and wept for her lost beauty. It was then that the Earth, whom the Tree had always known but never met, decided to speak.

"Dear Tree, why do you weep for your looks? Beauty can be found in matured trees just as it is in saplings."

"Good Earth," cried the Tree, "Do not be deceitful! Where is worth but in beauty? How can I be loved if I am not as desirable as I once was?"

“Oh Tree,” sighed the Earth, “beauty is not found in the face, but in the heart. If you had known this, you would have seen your suitors for what they were. Vanity has blinded you from knowing your own beauty, and has also blinded you from knowing if beauty lies in others.”

“How should you accuse me of this when these men have been just as vain as I have?” retorted the Tree, “I haven’t met a humble man in my life!”

“Nor have I,” said the Earth, “Even I know that I have failed to truly be a humble man, but this should not deter you from attempting to be so.”

The Tree, though taken aback, knew that there was truth in the Earth’s words, and over time, the Tree grew to recognize true beauty when she saw it. When the Earth saw this change in the Tree, he pined after her as any other man did, and the Tree, knowing that he cherished her for more than her looks, cherished him in turn. Unlike her other suitors, the Earth cared deeply for the Tree, and over time, the Tree found that she was undoubtedly attached to the Earth, for her roots had finally begun to grow. Today, the Tree no longer walks across the face of the Earth: her heart does not wander, nor do her feet.