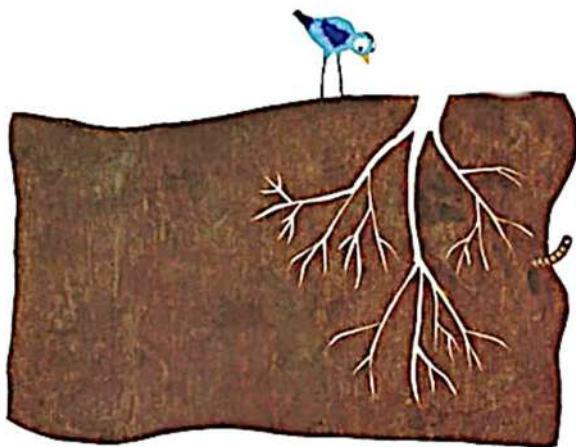




## *A grand old Tree*

Once there was a grand old tree.

Her roots sank deep into the earth, her arms reached high into the sky.



She was home to many creatures.



Birds nested among her branches, squirrels scurried through her leaves, caterpillars and ladybugs crawled about.



The grand old tree flowered, bore fruit, and sowed seeds...





The grand old tree lived a long, long time.

She basked in the sun, bathed in the rain, swayed in the breeze, and danced in the wind.



She grew and shed... many millions of leaves.

At last, the grand old tree was very, very old.

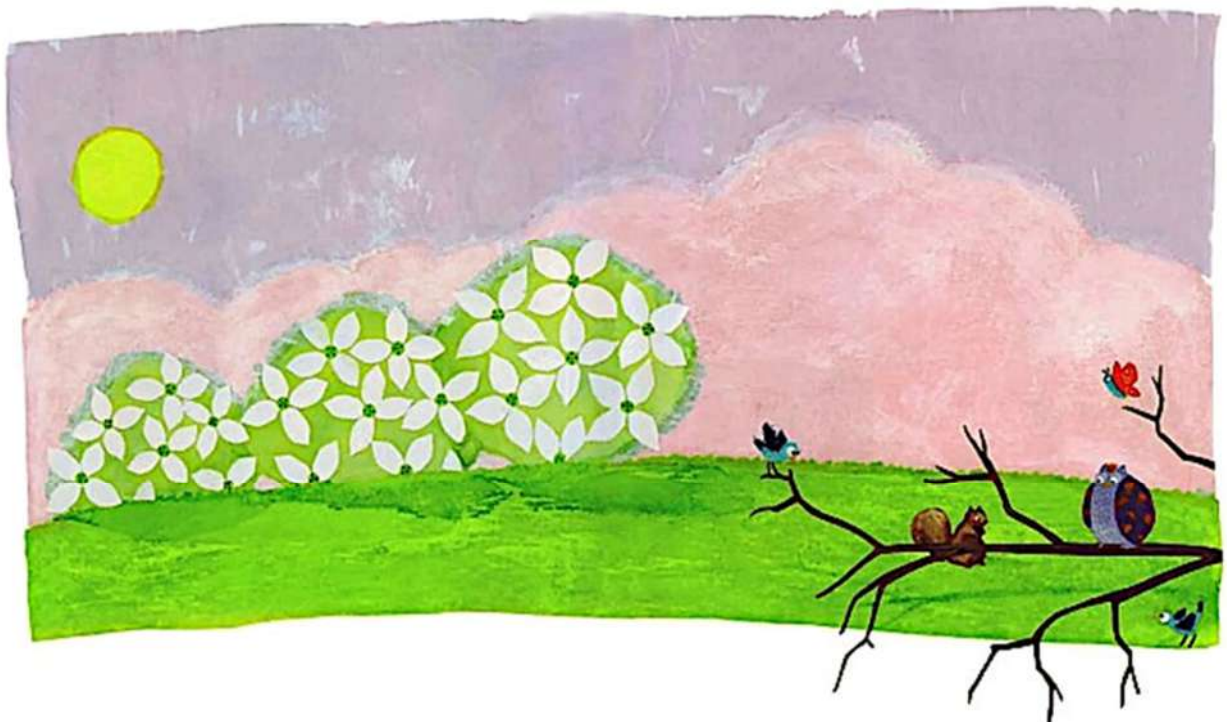
Her branches no longer swayed and danced, but cracked and snapped in the wind.

Finally she fell, and snow gently covered her.

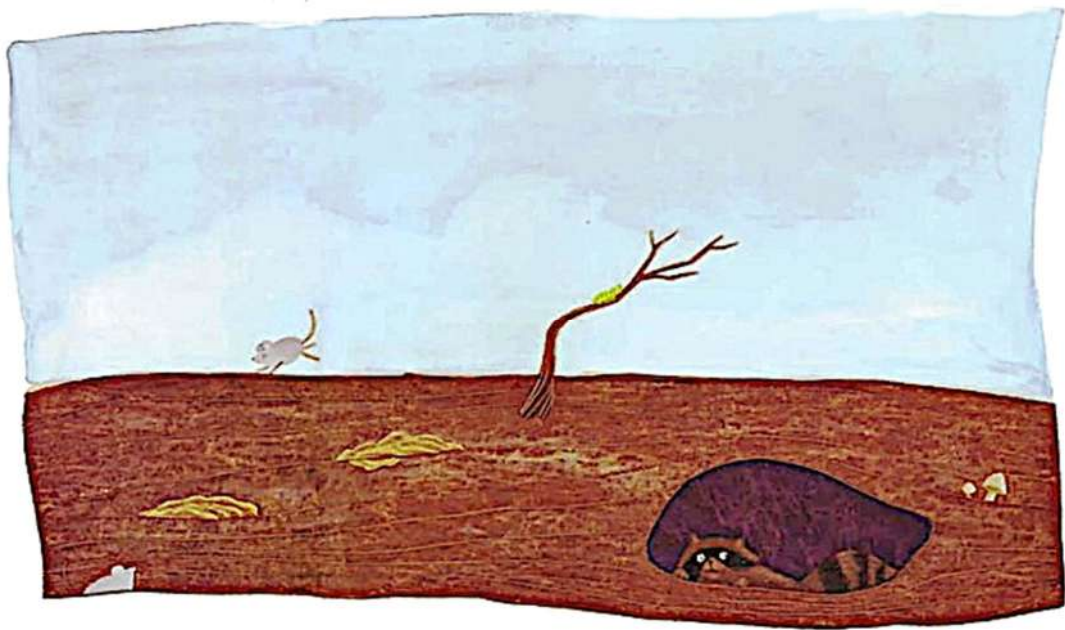
The old tree died.



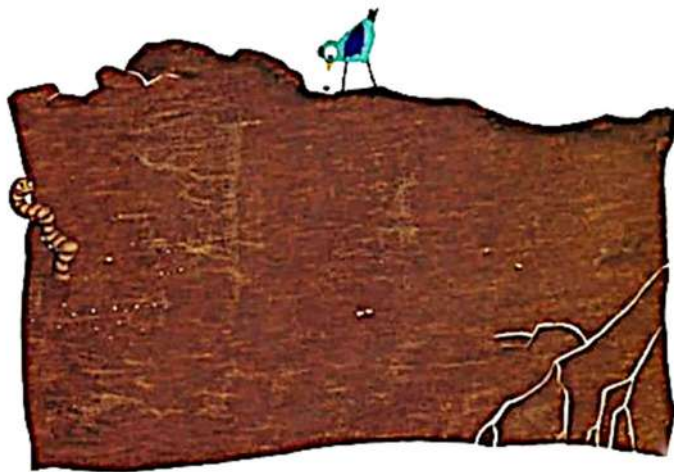
She no longer flowered, bore fruit, or sowed seeds, but she was still home to many creatures.



Raccoons nested in her trunk, centipedes crawled along her branches, and lichen grew on her bark.



The grand old tree slowly crumbled.



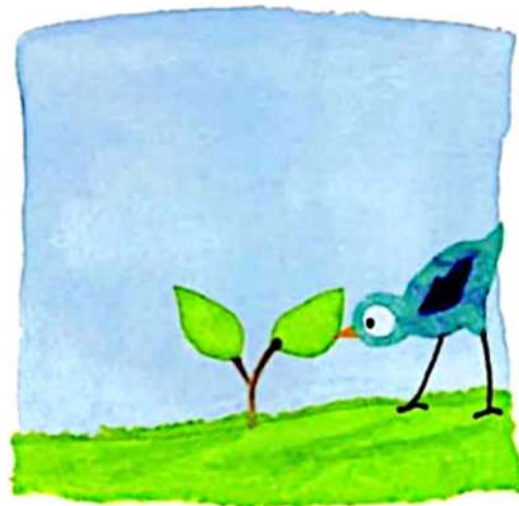
She became part of the earth.

Today the roots of her grandchildren sink deep into this earth.

Their arms reach high into the sky.



They are home to many creatures, just like the grand old tree.



Mary Newell DePalma  
*A Grand Old Tree*  
Arthur A. Levine Books, 2005