

Family Tree

by Lee Beavington

maple matriarch, pondering
proud gargoyle over the forest path
one end in rich darkness
the other—leaves cling to green
reaching for a star

bark wanes, branches wither
replaced by knots and galls
on a once slender trunk
time-bent axis a crooked column

adopted licorice fern
their flaccid fronds dangle
in whorled waterfalls
spore-borne neighbours
share neither root nor blood
with their haven and host

the maple's children have flown
on samara wings
family dispersed by wind
small, plain petals
design voluptuous daughters

fruit compete with cone
those enviable evergreens
never dropping the desolate shadow
no crepuscular canopy
like her golden thumbprints
in every loosened leaf
closing out the harvest sun

sticky tears flood her furrows
to flow across love totems
dead passion
carved in her bitter bark
knifed hearts with names
lovers beneath her solemn shade
this gnarled statue
feminine curves forgotten
gentle fingers of the sun
her only caress

cut cousins allow lonely light
felled cedar and fir
stumped rings of patient life
now petty stories on paper
vapid forms and invoices
for a world never still

she is spared by imperfection
uneven bones of xylem
dormant strength
creak with crushing skyward gravity
boughs held high
wintered by wilted petioles
only tremble in December
naked limbs shivering
fear of a spring
too far

yet she has prepared
family roots spread
into scion sprouts
soil-sewn to stand tall
and touch the stars

“Family Tree”
Lee Beavington

Bio:

Lee Beavington toils in writing, dabbles in Buddhism, revels in travel, swings in dance, and specializes in being. He lives in Vancouver, BC, where he works in ecology and writes in nature. The curious can find more at www.leebeavington.com.