

The Treehouse

The treehouse was high on a hill surrounded by redwoods. Though it was known as the treehouse, the name was not quite true. Actually, it was a small, one room house built on stilts high above the ground. A small porch of weathered wood wrapped around two sides, while the other two were blank brown walls, devoid of any openings or features. The roof was made from shingles, many now missing, with faded green trim around the edges. The house was clearly unfinished. Only one of the two doorways contained a door, whilst the other sat empty. The brass knocker, plundered from a long-ago rummage sale, lay in the middle, so tarnished it had begun to stain the wood around it. The windows too, were devoid of filling. Only one contained its clear plastic pane. Long ago the ivy had begun its slow ascent up the stilts, and now it had reached the railing of the porch, coiling its way from the building onto the surrounding redwoods. The vines seemed to connect the treehouse with the rest of the forest, as though it was one living organism. Unbeknownst to the ivy, or the small animals and insects that now made it their home, the house had not always been there. Only the redwoods were old enough to remember when it was built. They remembered when it was only a small circle of land covered in grass and weeds, the only part of the forest where no trees grew. They remembered when the old man and the young boy had cleared the weeds and begun to dig deep holes into the now empty earth. They remembered when those holes had been filled, the old man holding the newly placed stilts steady while the boy poured concrete into the openings. They remembered when there was only a platform, and when the platform grew walls and a roof. They witnessed the porch spring up as the boy, now a teenager, passed the old man his tools, and as time passed they saw the old man pass the teenager tools, as he struggled to cut the opening for the windows, and to

affix the door in its frame. They were there when the teenager came alone to the treehouse, dressed all in black, and sat on the porch and cried, the tears dripping down his face and staining the then unweather boards of the porch. They saw the teenager many times after that, though they never saw the old man again. Nor did they ever again see the teenager work on the treehouse. Once, they had been there when he came up with his tools, however, after a few seconds of staring at the building he had left. The teenager had long ago moved away, and nobody had been to the treehouse since. In that time new plants had sprung up, and new animals had found their way into the woods, and none of these new residents remembered a time without the treehouse. But the redwoods did. The redwoods would always remember.