



*The  
Christmas  
Tree*



## *The Christmas Tree*



*Wandering through the frigid forest, overwhelmed by the size of the majestic redwoods  
His footsteps creaked softly, yet echoed loudly amidst the surreal silence.  
A foggy gray layer of dew moistened the upper tiers of branches that hover above  
Gently protecting the silent habitat resting below it.*

*Amidst the shadows of these giants, a lone pine tree stands starkly  
With its twisted trunk tilting uncertainly upward toward the rays of the sun.  
Its sweetened sap sweats softly from its aging pores while  
Sharp bristles guard and protect its inner core.*

*The graying man hears it calling through the mist surrounding the woods and  
Decides that this imperfect tree is the ideal Christmas tree for his family.  
He slowly, meticulously cuts the trunk and watches its abrupt fall to the moss covered ground.  
He tenderly ties a rope to its narrow base and pulls it slowly, winding through the wooded path.*

*Hours later, he excitedly enters his warm home where he is swiftly surrounded by his grown children  
Who help him untie and mount this seemingly flawed, sparse, insignificant tree.*

*Once firmly upright in its stand, it still leans precariously as  
Two generations of adults sit back and jokingly note how frail and weather-beaten it is.*

*Moments later, their lively banter is interrupted by the shrieks of excited grandchildren  
Bursting into the room, grabbing the ornaments, spreading the tinsel, stringing the lights.  
With the placement of each treasured trinket a story slowly evolves to adorn their tree.  
The simple, wilting, tilting tree changes and becomes the root of their Christmas memories.*

*The decorated, transformed tree now appears so perfect, but beneath the Christmas glow  
It is still messy, the bristles are still hard, the branches still seep their sap.  
And while the ornate and colorful ornaments assist it in fulfilling its potential,  
It is all of the parts of the tree before them that present the true mirror of their own journey.*

*The unique qualities of this symbolic tree reflect the reality of our lives.  
Life is often complicated, uncertain, interspersed with adversity, despair and fear.  
But as we look beyond the imperfection, we see the hope, the challenges, the joy, and potential.  
We forget the hardships, and focus on the possibilities of creating beauty with our loving acts.*

*Despite the many challenges of these times, we must not lose our hope.  
We must appreciate the simple moments of passion that present themselves to us each day  
As we strive to live our lives to the fullest, helping to enrich the lives of others,  
Embracing the opportunities to create our own beautiful tree.*

*The simplicity of that beauty is truly all around us...  
It is in the sparkle of a bright-eyed grandchild filled with hope for an exciting new future.  
It is in the heart of a middle-aged woman trying diligently to make a difference  
And it is in the mind and memories of the elderly man reflecting on what his life has been.*

*May this Christmas season encourage us to look beyond the bristles and  
Challenges that we encounter each day.  
May it guide us to embrace each day as a special gift  
As we create a better life for ourselves and the world around us.*

*Frank Allocco, Christmas 2008*

