



“O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum!” – the first Christmas Carol I learned as a child on mother’s knee. The carol has endured, just as the tree it reveres.

The Christmas tree remains a poignant, silent witness amid controversies that engulf our hurting forests – our hurting world. This year has seen stepped up battles over utilization, preservation, conservation, development (take your pick) among environmentalist, industry, government, loggers, aboriginal groups, protesters, other ‘concerned’ citizens. Take your pick.

Blissfully, to date no faction is claiming the Christmas tree’s endorsement in support of a partisan position. Though some might argue that the Christmas tree has always been very clear on its own stand.

Perhaps you recall, as a child, reading picture books that told of ‘the lonely, little fir tree’ who wept over being bypassed as the festive seasons rolled by. Until that triumphant year – selection! All grow’d up, its richly scented boughs transformed – the most beautifully decorated, lighted Christmas tree – delivered unsurpassed joy to the entire village! Although the story never told us, it’s doubtful that the little green fir tree would have traded the seemingly brief stardom of seasonal focus for opportunity in more secure, long term tenure as a floor joist.

The miracle of the Christmas tree, just as the carol that enshrines it, lives forever. There is beauty sufficient in its aura still, to bring joy and hope for the entire village. It breaks down barriers – barriers about which NAFTA knows nothing. Tightlipped guardian of secret parcels that unwrap the magic in giving, sharing. It honors potential and fulfillment. It invites hands to join in a circle – even to sing “O Tannenbaum.”

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