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## **The Life of the Old Oak from Brockway**

### The Life of the Old Oak from Brockway

The 300-year old oak tree made its home in the middle of my driveway. He reached up, racing against skyscrapers, trying to be bigger and bolder than they were. He loomed over the ancient house that was almost as old as the oak. Throughout time he whispered stories into the wind of the things he had seen since he was born. The old oak spun tales about the time he was struck by lightning but stood strong and stayed for over a hundred more years. Storms were no match for the mighty oak; he overcame all storms no matter how treacherous.

Old oak saw many owners and ended up watching my family and me grow up. We walked by him every day on our way to school and when we went to play outside. He smiled and posed in our pictures when the family was over and when we went to dances.

Oak housed so many creatures; a baby raccoon sat two stories up while old oak watched us jump at the sight. He gave shelter to a family of groundhogs, who lived in the hole in his trunk. The ants and squirrels were constant guests, but the oak didn't care--he loved seeing animals enjoy the home he made for them.

He gave us shade during the scorching summer and sheltered us during the rainy and snowy days. He played pranks of falling over by dropping branches in the grass to remind us that he was there, but we never forgot. We admired him for living so long and being so strong, but we watched as he grew old, slowly weakening day by day.

The pandemic quarantine took a toll on his heart; the old, mighty oak was slowing down. He didn't see us leave the house for three months besides to get groceries. Our isolation hurt old oak's heart, and he wanted to see us enjoying the warm days again.

Then he decided to make the biggest sacrifice; on one particularly windy day, he decided that we should be outside more. That is the day he fell. He chose to fall into the grass so we wouldn't get hurt, but so we would have a reason to go outside.

This 300-year old tree gave us purpose in times of confusion and chose our happiness over his own. He lived longer than we ever will, but to give old oak's death purpose, he fell so we could survive.