

# An Ode to the Old Oak Tree

John Fuller

One day while passing an oak stand, I paused to think about what had transpired under these austere trees.

Under the trees there had been witchcraft, murder and treason. If only the trees could tell me their old, old story.

I stopped under the oldest of the trees. All gnarled and bent, it stood as a bad omen to all who passed under it.

Distinguished, it looked to me that this old tree could have survived this many tribulations and still have courage to stand.

I wondered who planted this behemoth amongst so much pain and suffering. Who do you owe your allegiance to?

Where are your conspiratous partners in this world? Where are the people that did you disservice by accompanying your shade?

How long ago did you last see a man or woman pass this way? Were they one of the few that dared to pass without warning?

Where are the Indians that once hunted under your boughs? Where are all the settlers that built a house in front of your presence?

How long did you observe the winter? Where are the acorns that gathered about your feet for all the deer and squirrel?

Did you weep when the children were buried in your shadow? Did you laugh when the storm blew down all about but not you?

Old oak tree: tell me your secrets. Tell me what you have seen. Please don't stiffen in front of me and tell nothing.

I want to know everything about this piece of ground that you dominate. Tell me though I know well that I will go mad.

If not today, tomorrow maybe. I may or may not pass your shade again, but promise me that you will inspire me to ask again.