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### The Maple leaf

It was fall in Canada- the time when the leaves are falling, when the snowflakes start forming in the clouds above. A cold front swooped in and stormed like an army rushing into battle, and humans bundled up in their warm and favorite autumn wear, mostly staying inside to stay warm. I stood there, outside, on the only thing I had left; my home branch.

My brother and sisters had already left home and were either out there in the world exploring or were under the feet of the mammals. What made me different from them was the tiny voice in my head that told me to keep holding on and to *not let go* . I was scared that if I let go, I would be forgotten, and that the trace that I left on the branch would be removed by a simple growing bud in the spring. I had this strong ambition inside me to listen to that voice but it was slowly being stripped away by this other voice inside my head saying *let go* . I'd would have rather not have had this thought in my head so I used every fiber of my being to push it and lock it away like a lion locked up in a zoo. I thought that I would be able to overcome this thought and that I could live the rest of my life in my home, but an event happened that forced me to give up and listen to the thoughts that I tried so hard to keep locked inside.

A roaring wind that shot like a bullet came in and assaulted my very being and the strength that I thought I had snapped as though a human was breaking a twig. I flew up in the air and before I knew it, I lost everything. I was so high up I could see the cities and rockies that were so distant and the prairies which surrounded the area like a fence. It was beautiful; if I'd never left home, I would've missed that sight. As I went with the flow of the wind, I saw so many different things. In the cities, there were buildings 100x bigger than my home tree and there were so many humans-way more than the number of my siblings combined. There were many different kinds stores and I took notice to this one that everyone goes to called Tim Hortons. There were so many people who paid attention to each other and helped each other out. I thought that humans were creatures that were just selfabsorbed, but it appeared that my judgement was wrong. Before I could explore more of the cities, another thrust of the wind blew me off my feet and I flew towards more acres of prairies.

There were seas and oceans of wheat and different crops growing all over the place and the number of farms were outstanding. Hours later, I was still fascinated by the land as I was by the city. As I looked down and admired the view, I started to take notice of the sky getting more grey, however, there was still a little light, and some warmth. My senses were increasing in sensitivity and the heat was getting hotter. As I looked up, I saw not an ocean of wheat, but a fire engulfing the forest and a city. The fear that I had when I was on the branch didn't even compare to that new fear. Every inch of my body was quivering and my immediate reaction was to get out, but I couldn't move. The demon they called fear had possessed my body.

I began descending at a quick pace- I was going to die. Just before I fell into the flames, a sudden gust sent me high in the air and I soared towards the Rockies. The demon they called fear leaped out of my body and the feeling of happiness drowned me. I had never been grateful to the wind, but it saved my life. As I reach the rockies, I felt a sudden chill down my spine as I plummeted down on top of a white sheet of snow. *So, this is what they call snow* , I thought to myself; if it was here, I wouldn't mind dying. As I closed my eyes and let my body rest, I felt a force pick me up, but it wasn't the wind.

“Mommy look at this” the child said. As I opened my eyes, I realized that the force was a child of a human. I wasn't scared but amazed; I'd never been this close to a human before. As I turned my head due to the crunching of the snow, I saw another human, but a much larger one.

“What is it?” the mother asked while holding on to the child's shoulder.

“I don't know what it is, but it looks like a leaf.”

“Honey, have you ever looked at the Canadian flag?”

“The red and white thing?”

“Ya the red and white thing,” the mother responded with a slight giggle.

“Can I keep it, mom?”

“Why would you want to?”

“It's beautiful,” the child said with a grin on her face.

“Sure.”

As I looked up to the humans, I felt a sense of peace and serenity. I was glad that I left the branch. Not only did I have a crazy adventure, but I came to terms with new emotions, gained new experiences, and found a new home. Canada is truly a great place to live and be.