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COMU3130

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***COMU3130 – Media Story***

***New Roots***

**NEW ROOTS**

Time is a curious thing; it waits on nobody, yet everybody waits on it. Devouring all things in its path, this omnipresent force dictates everything.

As I stood in my usual spot, these thoughts rippled over me like the clouds above, high up in the smoky sky. Looking up I mused over these shapeless whisps of water hoping they would crack and deluge the park before me, bringing life and sustenance to this dry oasis. It had been a cool spring, cooler than usual, making the cherry trees blossom late. Lush pink and purple mounds erupted throughout the park a reminded that a hot summer was ahead. I couldn’t remember the last time we’d had seasonal weather, a sign things were changing.

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The hot summer sun blazed overhead like a spotlight shining from the ocean above. Rising higher and higher it finally erupted over the empire state breathing life into my cold shadowed skin. I learned to cherish this moment while being reminded of the times before. The buildings hadn’t always shadowed me, and I recalled the moments as a youngling, before the skyscrapers ruled the skyline, when the sun would bring warmth to my skin as it breached the horizon every morning. Those were the summer days when the sky radiated the richest blue. Those were the days before it was tainted by the constant lingering smog, introduced from the industrial factories fuelled by those with an obsession for progression.

And as the sun sets, the last rays shine across the skyline, rigidly etched from the silhouette of the buildings and skyscrapers standing as far as the eye can see. But no sooner has the sun gone down before the artificial lights sparkle brightly, illuminating the evening atmosphere with a different glow. And the soft hum continues, like a cog forever rotating inside an engine that never stops. Reminding me of the place I live, the city that never sleeps.

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Golden yellows fold into warm oranges followed by the richest reds. Watching the leaves change colour was always my favourite part of autumn. It was also the busiest season in the park, from early morning runners to casual picnic goers everybody flocked to the park to enjoy the comparatively little green space located in the centre of the concrete jungle that surrounded for miles.

Soaring over the park an enormous dark bird roared deep like a lion, I will never forget the first day I saw an aeroplane. Oh, how times have changed. One does not have to look far to see the positive impact inventions like the aeroplane or smart phone have had on society. A testament to the vision and progression of humanity, but everything has a consequence and comes with a cost. A degree of balance is needed in every equation, somewhere along the way this was forgotten, and now we must all pay the price. As time flew on the trees grew bare. I watched as the leaves started to fall and the trees changed shape. Slowly, the park became a naked wasteland, outlined by the husky skeletons from the foliage that once was.

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Cold and bitter was the weather, a sure sign winter was on it way. Gazing up my suspicions were confirmed as I saw the first flakes fall from grey sky above, nestling and frosting themselves uniquely on the ground and shrubbery around me.

Seasons are inevitable. Dictated once again by time, they ebb and flow as the earth rotates the sun. In the past, seasons were distinct and consistent, their cycles were structured and sustainable. The evolution of mankind has disrupted the axis of this cycle, and insatiable consumption has led to the unbalanced nature of this equation. What were once predictable self-sustaining weather cycles have become extreme and volatile. Humanity is inducing change upon the earth and there are few who benefit from its destructive nature.

As it inescapably does, time catches up in one way or another. For some, this time comes early often from factors out of their control. My time has come to an end. Shortened by pollution, the result of toxic lifestyles led by the generations before, I depart this world with a sense of hope. I have lived a remarkable life, bearing witness to many incredible moments over the past 150 years. And as my last leaves fall to earth, parting with the skeleton of the Oak I once was, I look down at the children playing in the snow before me. I am content in the knowledge that I leave this world in their hands, the hands of the youth. Soft and supple as they are now; these hands hold the power to mould our earth into a more sustainable home for all.

**Epilogue**

Written as an article for the New York Times, this short story attempts to highlight the issue of sustainability from a unique perspective; an old Oak tree. This topic is so saturated and misrepresented in the media that a fresh set of eyes (and perspective) is what the people need. The story is targeted at the those who read the New York Times as this piece seems fitting in its contemporary nature and topics of discussion for the platform. It is hoped that this piece reinvigorates readers desires to make change and live a more sustainable lifestyle and go forth and promote that lifestyle to those around them. No change is too small, even the biggest trees start as seeds. ‘New Roots’ is a contemporary take on an age-old issue, served with a side of perspective.