

Written in the wake of a recent storm.

Requiem for a Queen

1

Borne from an acorn
In the Maryland colony
Fortune had her land near the Mother Tree
The seedling sprouted roots
Nurtured by the underground network.

2

A fungal connection across the forest
Protecting ash, maple, elm, hickory and other leafy species
Strength and weakness varied, no competition here
Mother Trees sent chemical signals when they sensed threats
Tapping into resources stored, enzymes for defense.

3

Through cycles of seasons
The sapling rose from the forest floor
Leaves spiraling toward light
A world of instinctive signals and scents
Countering voracious pests.

4

During the Civil War the tree reached its peak
100 feet towering over forest
Home for robins, owls, hawks, squirrels, spiders, caterpillars and ants
Her branches dance to the wind's melody
She spread her roots, connecting with saplings.

5

Then came stone walls, farmers and saws
Chop, chop, chop, wood for fences and houses
Then came the horseless carriage, the first-planned community,
The thinning of trees, grand houses and gardens
Now a Mother Tree, protecting her offspring.
No longer part of the forest, but a patch of what was to be.

6

Generations of children played in her shade.
But the climate was changing in the new century
The summer of '24 brought a drought
Six weeks of intense heat
Her roots stretched far and but not deep
The soil dry and caked at the base.

7

Then came the storm
Rumbling thunder
Purple sky pierced by lightning

Wind pummeling the old oak
sheets of rain loosen the roots
The world came crashing down.

8

The last of Mother Trees
Three centuries of rings
Lay across the street.
Then came the saws
Sheering limb by limb
Leaving but a stump to grieve.

8/18/24