**A Walk in the Woods**

“Dad?”

“Yeah.”

“Are you busy?”

“No Sean.”

“Are you sorry that Granny’s dead?”

“I suppose I am. I’d like to have seen her before she went.”

“Would you?”

“Yerra, it would have been nice. Are you not out playing with your cousins?”

“They won’t play with me or Hank. They say we have funny accents.”

“You don’t, you just have the accent that Irish people in London have. Like Hank has a New York accent.”

“Why?”

“That’s just where we live.”

“And Granny lives here in the country.”

“Yeah, she did. All right, let’s take a walk.”

“Why?”

“Because your mother and the rest are getting the house for granny’s wake.”

“Where will we go Dad?”

“We’ll take a stroll through the woods and see what we see.”

“You told me not to go into the woods.”

“Not on your own but I’m with you now.”

“Why is that OK?”

“Sure, I’m best friends with the trees in the wood, didn’t I grow up with them.”

“Do they know you, Dad?”

“They do of course. Sure, I’ve climbed all of them. Come on, climb over this wall.”

“Which way will we go Dad?”

“Down this way, towards the oak trees.”

“They’re very tall and they’re wider than even you Dad.”

“The oaks are the kings of the forest Sean. Like these big fellas here.”

“Why are oaks the kings of the forest Dad?”

“Well, they’re big strong fellas and their roots go down for miles.”

“Why are there trees in the world?”

“Well, when God created the world, he gave every living thing a choice.”

“What was that?”

“So, they could choose to move around the world as they grew, or they could stay in one place.”

“Is that right?”

“Yes. Well, the people and the cats and the giraffes and lots of other things decided to move around. But the trees, the flowers, and the grass decided to stay and grow in one place.”

“Did they?”

“They did. Let’s walk down this way.”

“Was God OK with that?”

“Ah he was, he didn’t mind. Mind your step there.”

“So why did the trees want to stay in one place Dad?”

“Well, you see they wanted a firm place to live where they could put down roots and grow with the other trees.”

“Like their family?”

“Exactly. And staying in one place gave them long lives, sometimes for hundreds of years.”

“Why do they live that long Dad?”

“I suppose it’s because they’re not worn out travelling and worrying and talking Sean.”

“And why do people like trees so much?”

“Ah they just do. In fact, I think they’re a bit jealous of trees.”

“Jealous?”

“Sure, trees live the long lives that humans would love to have, and they don’t have the restless spirit that we do.”

“So are the trees happy?”

“I’d say they are boy; I think that trees made the right choice at the very beginning.”