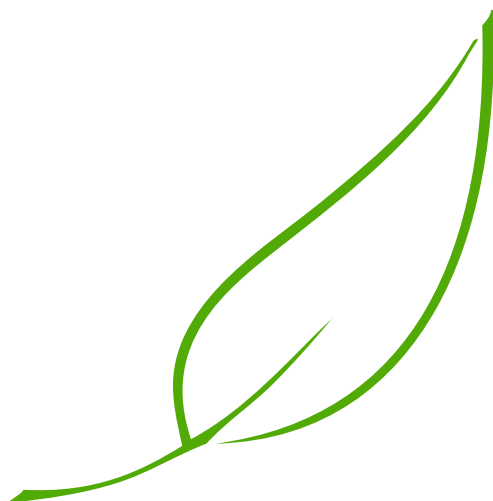


NATURE'S WAY

by Robert L. Crowe



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Characters: 2 (*any combination*)

CAMPER: (*stretches and looks at the sky*) Ahhh, I just love this! The great outdoors; a chance to bond with nature. Look at that scenery. A beautiful lake. A forest primeval. And no one around. It's a nature lovers dream come true. I think I'll plant a few of the trees I brought along. (*gets imaginary tree*) Where shall I plant it? Wait. What's this? A tiny wooden stake with a tiny blue flag on it. Well, that's silly. I'll just throw it away and plant my tree in that hole. (*throws away stake and puts tree in hole and smoothes dirt with foot*)

MANAGER: (*enters*) Hey. You! Big-foot. What do you think you're doing?

CAMPER: Oh. You startled me. I thought I was alone.

MANAGER: Is that why you threw away that stake?

CAMPER: Hey, that's funny. You see, I had hot dogs for dinner last night. And I would never throw away a steak! (*laughs but Manager does not*)

MANAGER: I just saw you throw away that blue flag stake.

CAMPER: Oh, that. Yeah. Someone left it out here.

MANAGER: Yes, Einstein. Our survey team left them out here. It's a survey stake.

CAMPER: Well, they shouldn't be so forgetful.

MANAGER: Did you pull up any more stakes?

CAMPER: Not yet.

MANAGER: Well, don't. We need those guidelines for the bulldozers.

CAMPER: What!?! Who are you and what are you talking about?

MANAGER: I'm the Project Manager for SoftDrink International. We're going to clear this area and begin construction.

CAMPER: Construction of what?

MANAGER: A nuclear powered SuperCola plant. (*Camper stands with mouth open in disbelief*) This will be the outer perimeter, and of course, that lake will have to go. The plant will pretty much take up this entire little valley and ...

CAMPER: Wait! You are going to build a SuperCola factory in this peaceful valley?

MANAGER: A nuclear powered SuperCola plant. Not just any old plant. This one will have tourists coming to see it ...

CAMPER: ...see it? ... See it belch? Belch cola and smoke and toxic waste?

MANAGER: Oh, there's no smoke.

CAMPER: You would wipe out one of nature's great scenic places for a factory?

MANAGER: Well ... when you put it that way Yes.

CAMPER: No, you don't. I won't let you! I am going to have a sit-in ... (*looks at himself standing*) or a stand-in, and stop all of your machines. You will have to kill me first!

MANAGER: OK. If that's the way you want it

CAMPER: What?

MANAGER: We usually don't bury protesters unless they ask us to.

CAMPER: You won't bury me! I'll sit here forever and ever ... and ever ...

MANAGER: (*sings ala Hallelujah Chorus*) Hallelujah! Hallelujah.

CAMPER: This isn't funny!

MANAGER: I think it is. You are trespassing on our property, interfering with our construction permit, and threatening our Caterpillar bulldozers. We have 37 machines and 154 men. And you say you're going to stop us? Seems a bit humorous to me.

CAMPER: Laugh if you want. I'm staying right here!

MANAGER: Very well. I wonder if you would stand like this (*Lifts one arm in the air in a pose.*) We can alter our plans a bit and build a fountain around you. But before we continue our friendly chat ... tell me why you are putting weeds in a hole. (*points to the small tree*)

CAMPER: You see? That's how much you know about nature. That's why slaughtering green things makes no difference to you ... you ... you chlorophyll killer! That is not a weed. It is a Bradford Pear!

MANAGER: That is a pear?

CAMPER: Tree. It is a Bradford Pear tree. And over there is an apple tree ... Jonathon.

MANAGER: My name isn't Jonathon.

CAMPER: I don't care! I expect those trees that I planted to live to a ripe old age.

MANAGER: Why would you come into a forest to plant trees?

CAMPER: Because that's where they belong. They feel wanted and have company. You don't see apple trees on the tundra in Kansas because there is no protection. Here, the trees can grow knowing that they have friends to help. Security will make them healthier. And, when it is time for harvest, the little bunnies and squirrels will have fresh fruit.

MANAGER: Do you have any pineapple?

CAMPER: Pineapple won't grow here.

MANAGER: Neither will those. When we get done, nothing will grow here. I assure you that those trees will not be here

CAMPER: (*sarcastically*) Ha! (*points*) I planted these trees and I'm going to be sure they grow. I will watch over them.

MANAGER: Sure. Why don't you lean over and give it a hug.

CAMPER: Go ahead. Make fun all you want. I'm not going to move. (*brief pause*) Do you just worry about making money and your stupid business? Don't you have any view of what's happening to our world? To our universe? The buffalo are gone. The forests are gone. Everything is pavement and steel and parking lots. We are losing our habitat ... our amber waves of grain. Surely, you must know that! Don't you listen to the comments about global warming? The loudest voice is that of our spokesman, former Vice President Al Gore. You must listen to what he has to say. Or maybe you don't know who Al Gore is ...



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