


**Sample Activities
in the forest:**
**Stories, songs, poems
and quotations**



*“Trees are sacred beings.
He who knows how to speak to them
and listen to them learns the truth.
They do not preach doctrines,
they do not give formulas.
They speak without focusing
on the details of
the original law of life.”*

Hermann Hesse



The following stories are excerpted from the book “Four Ecological Stories” by Professor Máximo Castro:

Stories No. 1

THE TREE SACRIFICE

By Professor Máximo Castro

On the banks of a rocky river grew a majestic espave and a big leafy fig tree. One day they were surprised when they saw two engineers approach. These fellows, without permission, studied and measured the size and dimensions of the espave, with what seemed more like fatal probes than caresses. The executioners filled their books with large numbers and, with malevolent avarice they saw how their income would grow from the sale of the wood. When the criminals departed, the espave, faced with the possibility of death, looked at the fig for solidarity and hope.

– “Oh my good neighbor fig, no one tries to assassinate you nor carry you off in pieces to the shops of the consumer society... I envy you my friend. Why don't you tell me your secret so that I can avoid this fate?”

– “Oh my esteemed neighbor,” answered the fig, “only the devil can save you. He is perhaps more sympathetic than these humans who approached your wide trunk.”

– “Why do you speak to me of him at this hour of my agony? Don't you see how I sweat sap and blood, my palate grows dry and my leaves turn pale when they hear the roar of the axe and the saw.”

– “When I speak to you of my friend the devil, it is because with him I have had good experiences when he visits me while I am blossoming on Good Friday. It is the moment when the humans appear to collect my flowers with evil intentions. The devil, as owner of this mystery, subjects the humans to an interrogation before sealing an alliance. Some serve as nourishment to the buzzards, others leave depraved with their souls belonging to Satan. They never return; that is why you see me here obese and full of life. Perhaps my secret is that I sympathize with the demon in search of souls. It is a value that you lack, because you are not in unison with the animals of the forest.”

– “You are mistaken, neighbor fig, my fruit serve to nourish many birds and mammals, my foliage refreshes the river bank and builds its volume.”

– “But you are still lacking sufficient sympathy,” answered the fig. “You must give shelter to the woodpecker, the squirrel, the bees and the toads in the plants at your feet. That way, when the assassin woodcutters approach again, they will see you damaged and so full of holes as to be useless to them.”

In this way the espave was convinced that the fig tree’s strategy really was logical. Gathering together some of the other forest inhabitants, he spoke of a master plan to save himself from being cut down, and all his friends were united behind him in a single purpose. And so the woodpecker drilled lots of holes in the espave’s trunk, the squirrels gave birth to their babies in its deep foliage and the frogs opened up their paths among the roots of the giant tree. Thus, the espave let go of his egotism and sacrificed himself for his friends. When the loggers arrived, they found that the magnificent tree was decayed and full of holes. The tree was filled with all sorts of bugs and creatures. Even the devil, full of his tricks, lent a hand. He caused the owl, sleeping in a deep hole in the tree, to fly out suddenly startling the capitalist loggers who fled in a panic never to return.



Stories No. 2

THE FENCE

By Professor Máximo Castro

When the Spaniards conquered the Canajagua Plateau, they found community-based economies. For our ancestors, the indigenous peoples, private property did not exist as the means of production. Their economies were characterized by collective work, developed through family relationships among the inhabitants of the community.

Regrettably for the majority of the peasants, the faragua seed appeared. It is a type of hybrid grass that in summer burns as if oil has been thrown on it. Together with the new grass came Cebu cattle which are heavy and do not produce much milk. A veteran and aged peasant in the region, known as Uncle Leonidas, recalls those early times:

– “Each one cleared or felled the best land to plant corn and rice, and there weren’t many cattle, this was true, but there was beef and milk, the deer roamed the area and were hunted with spears and rope traps, there were plenty of jack rabbits, agoutis and all kinds of bush birds, like the white-tail, the pheasant and mountain turkey. The few cattle there were ran loose, but with the appearance of barbed wire, it was like a curse, everything was over, everything, everything nephew,” affirmed the octogenarian.

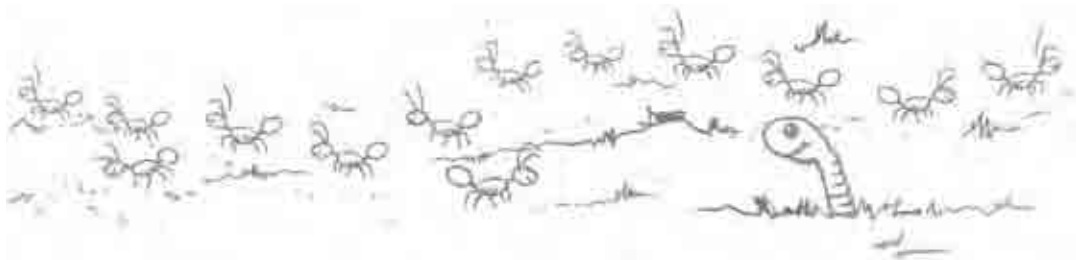
He picked up his old pipe, while a puff of smoke floated up, like a wispy cloud of the spirit. He sighed and continued evoking the past:

– “It’s like the refrain goes, ‘the one with the most spit, can swallow the most flour...’ The one with the most silver bought more wire and fenced in more land, felled trees, burned and sowed the seeds of damnation, to make pastures for the Cebu cattle, that was it, the whole reason. I’m going to tell you something, nephew, many years ago, a missionary came to this area. He preached in a sermon that the time would come when we would live fenced in like pigs. I didn’t believe the missionary and look, nephew, it turned out to be the painful truth. Today we live like that, in pens, like animals, despite all the studying and the science.”

Instinctively, he pushed up his old, repaired glasses, which were poised on his wrinkled face and looked long and hard at the fields, along which extended a long, but very long wire fence, entwined with almacigo and pitahaya that moaned in the hostile wind. Thoughtfully he continued:

– “This barbed wire is all over the place and there is faragua grass all over the place, ready for the summer fire. Basically, the majority always remain poor, with no cattle, no land, and no freedom. Because a few grabbed the common lands, they got what they wanted paying lawyers, who mixed everything up to make money off the ignorant ones. Those who could bought out their neighbors and cornered them on the edge of the road like slaves.” Uncle Leonidas breathed deeply and continued. “The missionary also told us, ‘Son, the biggest fish eats the smallest. That is happening as God’s punishment.’ We have destroyed our common bonds and opened the way to solitude.”

Uncle Leonidas finished his story and lowered his head, seated on the old bench, on one side of the gate of his rustic thatched house. He knitted his eyebrows and squinted into the fire that was even more incandescent at one in the afternoon. The clouds of smoke and the soot seemed to obscure the place. In the distance, the clouds covered the mountains with their shade and in an instant everything was filled with boredom, sadness and solitude.



Stories No. 3

THE COMMANDMENTS OF KING SEÑILES

By Professor Máximo Castro

Here is a story about a young hunter named Máximo Castrovich, an impulsive adventurer, who went into the forest with his gun ready to hunt whatever animal he found. Once he was deep into the woods, he recalled the advice of a wise old man whom everyone thought was a witch doctor, even he himself had made fun of the old man’s legends and myths. Still, he remembered:

– Look, Castrovich, the jungle is sacred, it has a face, eyes and ears; thousands of guardians watch over it. I also knew the Supreme King of all the jungles and forests whose name was Señiles. He is the master who meticulously cares for the trees, plants and each one of the animals who inhabit the jungle. Even the microbes and insects form part of his patrimony and they obey him.

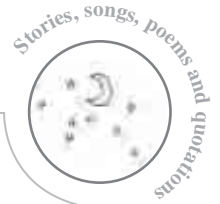
“Remember well, you should never hunt alone in the forest without first swearing to fulfill King Señiles’ Commandments.” ‘Well, I’m not exactly going to swear to them,’ he thought.

He carefully studied a semi-forested marsh and saw a beautiful tapir that was crossing freely. With savage instinct, he cocked his rifle and shot the animal that jumped, badly wounded, over the weeds to lose himself in the deepest part of the jungle. Máximo searched in the grass and noticed that the tapir was bleeding from the wound and followed his tracks. After he walked for several kilometers, he observed that the bloody tracks disappeared at the entrance to an enormous cave, covered by vines and weeds, whose charm attracted him with unusual passion. Once inside, he lifted his face to a magic light that came from the depths of a long tunnel. He felt like he was walking on air until he reached his destiny, and semi-consciously he saw an old man with a white beard that reached down to his navel get up from a marble armchair. In his left hand, he carried a macano cane, a symbol of authority; behind him were thousands of beings similar to humans, but much shorter. Two of these beings advanced and placed themselves on either side of Castrovich. They grabbed him by his arms and legs and picked him up. He lost his fear and asked:

– “Who are you?”

– “We are the guardians of nature,” they answered, their voices echoing.

– “Who is that old man?”



– “He is King Señiles, the master of the forests and the animals,” they answered.

Then, the old man said with an authoritative voice:

– “Young Castrovich, you find yourself at the top of Mount Tibet. We welcome you, but not without first reminding you that you have committed a grave crime. With your gun, you wounded the only surviving tapir. Your crime is against the animal kingdom, and for that great and only reason we have called a general assembly of all the guardians. We would like to ask you some questions.” An old copper bell rang.

In unison they all sat.

– “Are you aware of the crime you committed?”

– “Yes, majesty.”

– “Then why did you do it?”

– “Because I was hungry, sir.”

– “You’re not telling the truth, Mr. Castrovich. We know that you belong to an ancient family, where the crime you just committed is considered a sport. You will pay for your crime or you will have to fulfill a promise.”

– “What is it, your majesty?”

– “Broadcast using every means of communication, the seven ecological commandments until you have spent every last dime of your fortune. When you are truly hungry, come back here to satisfy yourself and your family.”

King Señiles lifted Castrovich’s left arm and said in a resounding voice:

– “Listen all free animals and humans! To save the earth and all of its inhabitants we must learn a new moral ecological code summarized in the seven commandments:

- That all free animals and humans recognize me, King Señiles, as the only earthly King with authority to punish the guilty.
- Do not wound or assassinate trees and plants, nor the free animals, nor the human animals.
- Do not drop bombs of any kind on the earth.
- Do not burn fields or pastures nor wastes as the smoke will overheat the earth.
- Do not spill factory waste in rivers or streams, nor spill oil in the oceans; avoid the use of oil.

- Do not use pesticides, nor insecticides, nor aerosols.
- Use other forms of energy, the most natural possible, such as solar energy.”

When King Señiles finished speaking, an intense white light struck Castrovich, who remained immobile and unconscious. He felt that they were transferring him in a carriage through sidereal space; they landed softly. He remained immobile, the darkness and the silence owned the jungle. Dawn soon came and Castrovich could see that the tapir was free again and looking at him. But this time he did not have a gun. Instead he had an ecological conscience; he had freedom and lots of hope.



The following three stories were excerpted from the book “Five Stories Written in Ngäbere” authored by Luciano Javilla, Marco Javilla, Andres Barranco and two radio programs on the oral culture of the Ngäbere. The purpose is for the readers to understand the Ngäbere indigenous woman’s vision of the cosmos: Nature as part of human life.

Stories No. 4

THE VISION OF THE FUTURE DAUGHTER-IN-LAW

By Luciano S. Javilla

One time a girl came to visit a young man. It was four o’clock in the afternoon when the daughter-in-law arrived. The mother-in-law asked her, “What did you come here to do?”

“I came for your son,” she replied.

“The boy already left for work, but go sit on his bed,” the mother-in-law said.

Time went by. Then the mother-in-law said to the daughter-in-law: “There is nothing to accompany the meal, so go harvest some spinach.”

Right away, the daughter-in-law got ready and went out walking in the rain. A little while later, the boy arrived and said, “I’m going to hunt for something to accompany the meal.” He grabbed his spear and left by the path. For a good while, no one knew anything about the hunter. When he returned, the mother-in-law asked him, “Did you see the daughter-in-law?”

“No, I didn’t see the daughter-in-law. I only saw a beautiful deer. It was eating spinach. I threw my spear, but I wasn’t successful. Even though the deer was wounded, it escaped,” the hunter responded. When the hunter told the mother-in-law this, she grew angry. Why did the mother-in-law get upset? The hunter couldn’t understand the reason. “I sent the daughter-in-law to harvest some spinach. Why did you wound her? She will never come to cook for us,” the mother-in-law emphasized. Then she sat on the bed to knit.

It turned out that this deer had turned into a woman and had come in search of the boy. The daughter-in-law was the deer that was eating the spinach, and in this way the hunter had speared the daughter-in-law.

This happened at the beginning of time, because long ago, wild animals were friendly with human beings. And, at the end of the world, this will happen again. It will happen just like before, so whoever you are, don’t act carelessly.

Stories No. 5

THE RACE OF THE TOAD AND THE DEER

By Luciano S. Javilla

One time a deer was running through the field. Then a dog started chasing the deer, but the dog never caught up to the deer. The deer raced and beat all the animals. The toad, who wanted to be first, dared to compete against the deer. So he said to the deer, “What makes you beat everyone? Let’s compete. I’m going to beat you in a race.” And the deer laughed at the toad.

For a second time, the toad said to the deer, “You’re afraid of me, aren’t you?”

The deer replied, “Look, mister, you want to compete with me, so we’ll compete in four days.” After this, the toad called a meeting of all the toads of the forest so they would be ready for the race with the deer.

Four days later, one of the toads showed up and said to the deer, “Let’s race to that rock.” The rest of the toads hid themselves one behind the other along the path according to the pace of the deer. The hour of the race arrived. There was a toad and a deer at the starting point. All the animals of the countryside arrived to watch the competition. A few said that the toad wouldn’t win. Then it was time to start the race. “One, two, three!” The moment the race began, the deer jumped and took off running. Immediately the toad hopped before the deer. Each time the deer touched the ground, there was a toad in front of it. The toad’s stomach made a noise when it jumped in front of the deer. This happened throughout the entire race. At the finish line, the deer could no longer take it. This is how, and it is the only way, that the toad beat the deer in the race.

All the animals of the countryside cheered and congratulated the toad. This happened because the toads got in line along the whole path. They were hopping, each one on his turn, before the deer. That’s why he won. And listen to me well, for that reason you should not compete against the toad because he will win.



Stories No. 6

THE FIGHT BETWEEN THE TOAD AND THE CRAB

By Luciano S. Javilla

One time a crab was standing on a path, and a toad passed by. Showing signs of a bad upbringing, he didn't greet the crab. When he was far away, the crab said, "Don't say hi to me, Mr. Toad, because you are not very nice. Right? You have big eyes, a big mouth and a big belly." This is what the crab said to the toad.

At first, the toad didn't pay attention, but when he was further away, he started thinking, "That crab has offended me. I'm going to ask him something." And he returned to where the crab was. He arrived and stood in front of him, and he asked, "What did you say to me?" At first the crab remained quiet, but the toad began to bother him, so much so that the crab answered, "This is what I said. You are ugly, have big eyes, a big mouth and a big belly. Why didn't you say hello to me?"

The toad told him, "When did we have a fight where you beat me for you to say such things to me? Today we're going to fight right now because you offended me."

Immediately the toad inflated himself and stuck his tongue out at the crab. The crab turned around and cut him with his claw. The toad was wounded on the tail by the crab. In other words, the crab bloodied the whole toad. The crab ran to his hole. The toad ran behind him to the hole, but he couldn't go inside because of his big belly. Then he began bragging, "I chased the crab away!"

The toad was making himself famous claiming that he had beat the crab. This is what he said, "The crab wounded me, but very little. I wounded him more." Then the toad looked at his tail and saw that the crab nearly cut it off. When the toad realized this, he was upset. So he went to the witch doctor to cure it. And this fellow did cut off the toad's tail. As you can see, in the beginning the toad had a tail, but because of the fight with the crab he lost it and ended up with a stub. Be careful. Don't get into fights like that.

The following songs were excerpted from the book “Patria y saloma: Décimas Panameñas por los Derechos Humanos,” produced by the UNESCO-DANIDA Project Education in Human Rights. A décima is an important musical element in the cultural life of Panama.

Décima No. 1

REFLECTION

By Simeon E. De Leon C.

**CARBON MONOXIDE,
THAT BIG AND POWERFUL COMPOUND,
SLOWLY DESTROYS
OUR WEAK OZONE LAYER.**

The smoke of the cigarette
is an insecticide
an assassin and a killer
that kills without a trigger.
The problem isn't a simple one
It's found in our fertilizer,
under another guise.
We feel it in our ground;
Up into the sky it is bound,
Carbon monoxide.

The air we breathe
is contaminated,
Foul on occasion
but we need it.
We don't hear the call
that many are making;
We must pay attention
to the constant destruction
it causes
without compassion;
such a big and
powerful compound.

The indiscriminate chopping
damages vegetation,
and the man who lacks
compassion says,
"I don't care about anything."
The flowers will come to an end,
annihilating the environment;
There isn't enough animal life
in the country and the city;
Man in his maliciousness,
destroys us slowly.

The ultraviolet rays
stop the radiation
preventing the destruction
of our pretty planet.
The atmosphere is replete
with a gas called carbon.
In my verse I propose
very serenely
that we should truly
care for the weak ozone layer.

Décima No. 2

SONG FOR LIFE

By Teresa Menicuti

SO THAT NO SONG DIES,
AY! WE'LL DANCE NIGHT AND DAY;
DON'T THROW TRASH OUTSIDE,
AY! WE'LL SAVE THE BAY.

I make a toast to the four winds
When the waters escape
And the petticoats sway
Ay! They take our breath away.
For all to be happy
We begin this game,
A new century, see you later,
All earth's children
Peace, don't explode into war
Ay! We're playing with fire.



Décima No. 3

TRASH EVERYWHERE

By Santos Díaz

Apparently from the amount
of trash in the streets,
we will drown in the details
of a lot of filth.

It's a clear reality
that deserves more attention
on the part of the population
because it's irresponsible,
and guilty attitudes
aggravate the situation.

Even the stray dogs,
as well as pigs,
who are as stupid
as crack addicts.
There are so many scavengers
and you see so much filth
that it unfairly shows
that the common citizen
has a view that goes along with
having a pretty dirty mind.

They collect trash
just to fulfill their mission,
but they leave behind a load
to increase their stature.
This attitude reassures
the worker
who fails at his work
and produces such evil,
because to be mortal
among so many flies and stench
and do miracles
shows an example that suffocates.

So much trash is spread
on sidewalks and gutters,
that the drains are narrowed
and overflowing.

This condition is aggravated
by stoves and refrigerators
strewn on the sidewalks,
frames and car chassis, boxes,
and bones of whatever.

They are bad smelling places
and they are difficult to cross
because to be a garbage dump
is 'welfare' for some.
They are the places most visited
by these communities,
of excessive evils
for acting out of revenge,
in the face of their own defeat
they produce only trivialities.

It could be very healthy
If they appointed inspectors,
who weren't law breakers
and supposedly aren't to blame.
This is unacceptable
because the deed would revert
back
to the responsibility it has,
IDAAN and its gang.

Poems No. 1

CHILD

By Gaspar Octavio Hernández
(Panamanian poet 1893 - 1918)

When on the hidden path
Only thorns and pebbles you see;
When on the gloomy path you sigh
To find a friendly mate,

Think that on the edges of the shady path
There is always someone that shelters your destiny:
It is the tree that rises on the edges of the path
Offering to all sympathy.

Think that on the edges of the calm path
Where you go wounded from fears,
Hangs the tree its gentle arch of flowers
To offer you in each blossom his soul.

Child, take care of the tree!
Care for its strong gallant trunk and branches!
It is a cradle: the tree protects your life!
It is a box: the tree wraps you in death!

Tree! Pure symbol of a yearning
That in our souls the illusion clings;
Like you, we wish to live in the earth,
And like you, live with our face to the sky.



Poems No. 2

FATHER

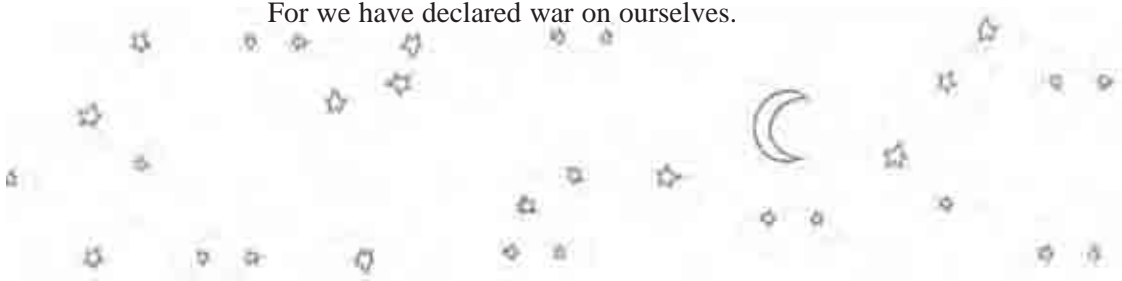
By Juan Manuel Serrat

Father
Tell me what
They have done to the forest
That has trees no longer.
In winter
We have no fire
Nor in summer
A place to rest.
Father
The forest is no longer a forest.

Father
Where there are no flowers
The bees do not make
Either wax or honey,
Father
The field is no longer a field.

Father they are here now.
Monsters of meat
With worms of steel.

Father
They are killing the earth
Father
Stop crying
For we have declared war on ourselves.



Poems No. 3

WINTER GARDEN

By Pablo Neruda

This is the hour
Of the fallen leaves, crushed
Over the earth, when
Being and not being they return to the bottom
Divesting themselves of gold and greenery
Until they are roots once again
And again, demolishing themselves and being born,
They rise to know the springtime.

Poems No. 4

DISTANCES

By Juan Antonio Corretjer

Country is to know the rivers,
The valleys, the mountains, the huts,
The birds, the plants and the flowers,
The mountain paths and the plains,
The waters and the highest peaks,
The shadows, the colors
That paint the east
And awaken the west,
The tastes of the water and the earth,
The multiple aromas,
And at night the thunder
That rumbles and terrifies in the darkness.

Poems No. 5

TREE

By Pablo Neruda (End of the World)

Last night when the lights went out
My roots fell asleep
And my eyes remained
Entangled among the leaves
Until later, with the shade
I lost a branch to dreaming
And up my trunk climbed
The crystal cold night
Like a transparent iguana.

Then I slept.

I closed my eyes and my leaves.



Poems No. 6

ODE TO WOOD (excerpts)

By Pablo Neruda

Ah, how I know
And recognize
Among all things
That wood
Is my best friend.

I know you, I love you,
I saw you born, wood.
That is why
If I touch you
You answer me
Like a body
That is loved,
You show me
Your eyes and your fibers,
Your knots, your moles,
Your veins
Like immobile rivers.

.....

Beneath
The sordid paint
I make out your pores,
Drowned you call me
And I listen to you,
I feel
You shake
The trees
That shaded my infancy,

I see
Come out of you,
Like a flight of the ocean
And doves,
The wings of the books,
The paper
Of tomorrow,
For man
Pure paper for the pure man,
That will exist tomorrow
And who today is being born
With the noise of the chainsaw,
With a tearing
Of light, sound and blood.

Quotations No. 1

THE FOREST IS MORE THAN THE SUM OF ITS TREES

Horst Stern (taken from STERN, H. Rettet den Wald, Kindler Verlag, Munich, 1989)

“**T**he forest is this common presence and this mutual support system of plants and animals, visible and invisible, young and old in a limited or broad space. Even today, when nearly all trees die under the saw without having lived a full life, the forest continues to be our last big ecosystem where life occurs naturally.

“Therefore, the forest is more a place for man the less he perturbs it with the anxiety of his economists to harvest it and the unlimited demands to take advantage of it for his recreation. The forest shows us that monotony dulls the mind and threatens life: Only the mixed forest of low foliage and conifers, of young and old trees intermingled, is a happy and strong forest.

“The forest also shows us how to be human. It shows people who know that not only the perfect, but also the deformed and even the sick offer an invaluable service to society. Just as a dangerous illness nourishes existential reflections in man, the sick tree nourishes countless bacteria, moss and insects that transform the half dead biomass of leaves, branches and trunks into new forest humus or serves as food for other animals. The healthy man singularly dedicated to increase his material possessions is bereft of all valid reflection of a thoughtful being. The superior animals abandon the purely useful and commercial forest.

“The forest also shows us the feeling of death. A young spruce can live many decades under the leafy top of an old beech, without growing more than a few meters and with a diameter thinner than a human arm and very close yearly rings. As soon as the giant falls and opens a path to the sun, the spruce begins to grow. That is the way the forest rejuvenates itself. Individuals die, but its life is eternal.

“The effect of the forest’s well being is even more important than its wood, more than the air that it offers us to breathe, more than the air that it cools and cleans for us, the water that it filters and conserves, the silence it generates, the soil it retains. The forest is not only man’s green pleasure, but a place where nature continues to exist, where the rest is lost. However, we are only capable of seeing what we know.”

Quotations No. 2

QUOTATIONS ABOUT THE FOREST

“It’s a vertical world... a nation of birds, a crowd of leaves...”

Pablo Neruda

“Forest conservation speaks of the wisdom of a people.”

Benito Juarez

“The universe requires eternity...

For this reason they declare that conservation
of this world is a perpetual creation,
and that the verbs ‘to conserve’ and ‘to create’
only here appear as enemies, but in the heavens are synonymous.”

Jorge Luis Borges

Historia de la eternidad

“Do not forget
that it only takes about half an hour
to cut down a beautiful tree.
To grow to a height to be admired,
the tree takes a century.”

Eugene Roth

“While walking
I took a summer leaf
so that I could one day remember
the song of the nightingale
and the greenness of the forest
that I crossed.”

Theodor Storm

“Plant a tree, my friend, plant a forest and don’t ask
who will dance in its shade;
only think that your ancestors who also did not know you
planted this forest for you.”

Anonymous

“The only goal of education: style.

The important thing is not the equipment or the instruction but the tools used to capture it.”

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

“What our industry and our homes consume in coal, oil, natural gas and peat are energy reserves left by the tree and other plants over a period of 600 million years. Our life today is based on this past of the trees.”

Erich Hornsmann

“He who wants to protect the forest must protect its products.”

M. Kochskaemper

“Everything is foreseen so that the trees do not reach the sky. First the leaves fall, then the trees.”

“It is difficult to transplant an old tree.”

“He who plants a tree, cannot wait to rest in its shade.”

Chinese proverbs

“Forests go ahead of people, deserts follow them.”

Chateaubriand

“A dead tree still makes a strong beam.”

Paul Claudel

“Plant wheat if you are planning for a year. Plant trees if you are planning for a millennium.”

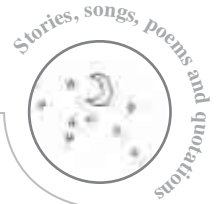
Kuan-tzu – 300 BCE

“I thrill at the victory of each nettle over the concrete.”

Jean Giono

“We have lost the ability to hear the language of nature because we have not trained this organ; we have lost this ability by having learned so many other things to the point of believing that we know more than nature.”

Theodor Kuenkele



“You should not argue with experts of limited vision. They know the price of everything but they know the value of nothing.”

Horst Stern

“It seems very smart to grab the biggest piece for the future. That way, the great future we could have with a bit more patience is consumed, first within ourselves, and then, without a doubt, in our world.”

Christian Schuetze

“Soon it will be possible to travel to any place on the planet, only it won’t be worth going there.”

Konrad Lorenz

“Any stupid kid can squash a beetle, but none of all the wisest men in the world can create one.”

Schopenhauer

“Believe me because I have experienced it; you will learn more in the forests than in books; the trees and the rocks will teach you what no teacher can tell you.”

Bernard de Clairvaux

“Trees are sacred beings. He who knows how to speak to them and knows how to listen to them learns the truth.

They do not preach doctrines; they do not give formulas.

They speak without focusing on the details of the original law of life.”

Hermann Hesse

“A tree exposed to the sun, an eroded rock, an animal, a hill; they have a life, a history, they live, suffer, survive, enjoy, die, but we do not understand that.”

Hermann Hesse

“The forest appeals to us to listen closely.”

Hermann Hesse

“He who learned to listen to the trees will never want to be the same.”

Hermann Hesse

“If your soul is sick, hide yourself like
a wounded animal in the forests because
the forests will cure you.
Dark trees are quiet friends.
They receive you in silence and they treat you well.”
Siegfried von Vegesack

“He who loves nature, loves also the trees.
Sometimes it seems to me that they are closer to us than other lives,
that they speak an understandable language
for those of us who listen from the depths of our soul,
even though we may not understand them with our intellect.”
Herbert Groening

“Do you know what a forest is?
Is it nothing more than ten thousand fathoms of wood?
Isn't it more like green happiness for man?
Berthold Brecht

“In the forest there are things
that require years and years of reflection
while one lies in the moss.”
Franz Kafka

“The majority of the people don't know the world's beauty
and the marvels it contains in the smallest things,
in a flower, a rock, a bark or a birch leaf.
Adults, with their businesses and worries, suffering their picayune things,
are losing the ability to see these riches.
A great eternal beauty extends throughout the world and distributes itself
impartially among the big and small things.”
R.M. Rilke

“A tree can be your friend:
It doesn't speak to you but you know that it loves you because it gives
you apples, pears or cherries and also a branch for you to swing on.”
Joan Walsh Anglund

“You, traveler, who arrive by this path, listen to me before you do me harm! I am the warmth of your home on cold winter nights. I am the protective shade from the burning summer sun. My fruit quenches your thirst on your travels. I am the beam that supports your house, the board in your table, the bed on which you lie and the plank with which you build your boat. I am the handle of your hoe, the door of your cabin. I am the wood of your crib and of your coffin. I am the bread of goodness, the flower of beauty. Traveler, listen to my plea: “Don’t harm me!”
Inscription on the trees in Portugal

“Even if I knew the world would end tomorrow, I would plant an apple tree today.”
Martin Luther

“The forest lives better without humans, but people live worse without the forest.”
Theodor Kuenkele

“We treat this world as if we had a spare in the trunk of our car.”
Jane Fonda

“In agriculture, the sins committed against nature affect the sinner himself, in the forests the sins committed against nature always affect the generations to come.”
Felix von Hornstein

“A tree serves to make a million matches, one match can destroy a million trees. The human talent for creating a vital living space is only surpassed by his talent for destroying it.”
Georg Christoph Lichtenberg





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The Soil 5, Fallen Leaves (p.96)