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The Campout

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ME AND A TREE CRAIG ERICKSON

The Campout

LINDA BROOKS ALRED

In the arms of a tree,
a willow bent to the ground.
Leafy curtain shielding,
sheltering my limbs
with its own twisted arteries,
rooted at the water's edge.
Wind rocks my perch
and I feel kin to this
fortress which comforts me.

Sun rushes through the veil
and dances in my eyes, upon my arms
encircling my protector.
This knarled guardian
has withstood the summer storms,
and taken in the rain.
But now my cheek,
pressed against this ragged skin,

anticipates the shedding,
the letting go,
giving in
mutely to the fall.
Across the sky,
winter comes.
Throat to the wind
I keen our loss.