

The pear tree loved its spot on the top of the hill. It had lived its whole life on the top of that grassy rise. As the vibrations reached down to the very tips of its roots, it remembered every year it had been there.

The tree could vaguely remember small warm hands carrying it up the hill and burying it in the cool, soft dirt. The same dirt its first root had dug down into, anchoring it into the hillock, growing a firm base for when its tiny leaves first pushed its way past the grass and out into the glorious sunlight. Its life had improved from there. Someone had walked up the hill almost every day to water its leaves. When it was finally large enough to peer over the other plants, it found its lonely little hill wasn't so lonely. Buildings stood close to the base of the knoll, and other trees pockmarked the land.

The vibrations racing through its trunk continued to shake the tree to its core.

Over the years, the tree grew tall and strong, and it was able to see farther. To its surprise, it found that it was on the edge of a city. The plot of land it occupied was, for the most part, unsettled. However, buildings stood as far as the eye could see in all directions. Soon, flowers blossomed on its limbs, and year after year, those blossoms turned to fruit. Many people from the surrounding building partook of its fruit and admired its flowers. One man took to sitting under its limbs for shade every day, tippy tapping away at a device that sat in his lap. As enjoyable as it was to shade him, the tree's favorite thing was to see a couple admire its beauty and to fall deeper in love with one another.

The vibrations shook the pear tree's limb, forcing its last leaves, still clinging to the branches, to float lazily to the ground.

Over the years, the pear tree grew too old to produce flowers or fruit, and it sat bereft on the top of the hill. It didn't mind, however, as children began playing around it. They would run around the hill and play in its branches. The tree enjoyed carrying them as they played and didn't even mind when they accidentally broke branches here and there. It just gave it more strength to grow them elsewhere. As the years crept by, the buildings marched ever close; the children grew up and moved away, and the air became denser with the smog of the humans' advancements. However, the pear tree endured watching, waiting, and wondering.

Now it was over. The vibrations worked their way through its core and the tree let go. It felt the wind move, one last time, through its branches. Then those same limbs snapped and groaned against the ground under the weight of the trunk they were attached to. The pear tree wouldn't see another spring, wouldn't have any more children play in it, or watch another couple fall in love in its shade. It had heard the two humans talking about "leveling" and "development" but hadn't known until the machines moved up the hill that its life was at an end.

It wasn't angry at the humans as its final moments ticked away. It wasn't even sad that its life was over. It had seen many years of pleasure and enjoyment. It had stood tall and strong. It had given shade and fruit to those who wanted it. No, as its life ended, it was content to fall into the darkness, knowing it had been a faithful sentinel throughout the years.

The end.