

"A Walk Through Cox Arboretum"

As I awoke, I rubbed my eyes open to find the intense orange light from the rising sun shining on the checkered, blue comforter that covered my body. I looked out my frosted window to see a hail of white fluff swirling about in every direction. After a moment I heard my mother calling me to come and eat breakfast. Although I wasn't particularly hungry, I tramped on down the stairs to the kitchen where my younger brothers were fighting over who would sit at the head of the table. The situation was resolved when I, the almighty, eldest brother, took the spot for myself. While we were eating we decided that, since it didn't snow frequently in Dayton, today would be a ideal opportunity to visit Cox Arboretum. So after we finished eating we all got our clothes together, loaded into the car, and set out to visit Cox's.

We arrived there early enough so that it wasn't crowded. After sliding in to a parking space, my family and I got out of the car to witness the amazing sight before us. Legions of proud trees, covered with glowing snow, surrounded us. The pond directly ahead of us hadn't completely frozen over yet, and complemented the blanketed earth well. As we walked around it, I noticed the stalks of leaves bundled together, as if to warm each other. A group of hungry ducks seemingly motionlessly glided toward us. My mom quickly distributed the bread we had brought to feed them. Living in such a friendly environment the ducks weren't at all afraid to eat from my hand. As one of them gobbled down a chunk of bread from my palm I could examine the layers of purple, green, and brown feathers that made him so beautiful.

We proceed on to a nature trail through the frozen forest. Being that it was fairly cold, I took the time to fill a large thermos with hot chocolate so when everyone else was freezing I could stay warm. As we wandered through the fresh snow I felt at home among the wooden pillars surrounding us. Amongst the highest of the branches, which seemed to grab out for each other from one tree to the next, were two brown squirrels playfully scurrying around. Eventually we came to a shallow crick which was frozen over. The ripples in the water seemed to have frozen instantaneously as if defying time. After performing a quick test of the strength of the ice, my dad, my brothers, and I quickly crossed the slick surface, but my mom waited behind because she was afraid of falling through. She volunteered to go back to the car and wait for us, but we immediately went back and helped her. My father and I held her hand, while my brothers supported her from behind. When we got to the other side we sat down on some oak benches exhausted from all the walking we did. Being that I was fairly cold, I decided to have some hot chocolate. As I took a sip I noticed the rest of my family was cold also, so as a gesture of familiness passed around the thermos. We sat their for a good amount of time just talking.

After everyone finished the hot chocolate, we proceed along the trail, which looped around to the beginning. As we approached the end, the wind died down and huge flakes of snow began to fall from the sky. As we left the arboretum, the last thing I remember was a magnificent blue jay perched in a forest green fir tree singing what seemed to me to be a song of praise. That was when I realized , I too should sing a song of praise.

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