

# *The Tree of My Life*

*by Edward Rowland Sill*

*When I was yet but a child, the gardener gave me a tree,  
A little slim elm, to be set wherever seemed good to me  
What a wonderful thing it seemed! with its lace-edged leaves uncurled,  
And its span-long stem, that should grow to the grandest tree in the world!  
So I searched all the garden round, and out over field and hill,  
But not a spot could I find that suited my wayward will.  
I would have it bowered in the grove, in a close and quiet vale;  
I would rear it aloft on the height, to wrestle with the gale.*

*Then I said, "I will cover its roots with a little earth by the door,  
And there it shall live and wait, while I search for a place once more."  
But still I could never find it, the place for my wondrous tree,  
And it waited and grew by the door, while years passed over me;  
Till suddenly, one fine day, I saw it was grown too tall,  
And its roots gone down too deep, to be ever moved at all.*

*So here it is growing still, by the lowly cottage door;  
Never so grand and tall as I dreamed it would be of yore,  
But it shelters a tired old man in its sunshine-dappled shade,  
The children's pattering feet round its knotty knees have played,  
Dear singing birds in a storm sometimes take refuge there,  
And the stars through its silent boughs shine gloriously fair.*