

The Bodhi Tree

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So spoke the beggar,

You Ficus, stand firmly
and free—multitudes come to take
refuge in Thee. Your exasperated limbs,
restless, ready to embrace: winged beasts,
weary pilgrims, seekers of Truth, amorous youths,
uninspired poets and undesired derelicts.
(I have been all of these.)
You spurn no creatures
plights or pleas—
But who tends
to your needs?

So said the Ficus,

Like you, I have been neglected—
numinosity swept 'neath the leaves so none can
claim responsibility. With each sapling forsaken
another ring furrows 'round this tired eye.

Time.

Cold crackled scales thatch through my skin;
once luscious mane wafts wiry
and thin; vines of my own design
have desecrated these hallowed insides:
You're the first to pay me any Mind.
(Before the old beggar could lift a
finger, they cut down that loving timber.)