



Those Who Can See the Forest for the Trees

I was cruising through a suburban neighborhood in my mommy-van one afternoon with my 5 and 6 year olds comfortably strapped in their booster seats, probably listening to the Wiggles, and thinking about who knows what. We had just finished their routine check-ups at the doctor's office, and all was well. We were headed back home to Half Moon Bay along the same route I'd taken many, many times before, since this had been my previous commute to and from work. Nothing much had changed, except that now I had two small passengers with me on the drive.

I rolled to a stop at an intersection and suddenly my 6 year old blurts out *"Mommy! I wish we lived in THAT house!"* pointing enthusiastically to our left. I glanced over and after a swift assessment, was thoroughly puzzled. The house was smaller and older than ours, and in my opinion, didn't appear extraordinary in any way. Not to mention the fact that it was on a much busier street, and I couldn't imagine being able to let my young kids play outside.

But instead of simply insisting that our house was better suited for our family, I asked, "Why Honey-bun?" His reply gave me one of those 'smack you upside the head' kind of moments. *"Because Mommy, look at that tree! If we lived there, we could see that tree every day!"* In an instant I realized that I was right; the house was nothing spectacular, and it rested on a heavily-trafficked corner. But how I had missed the massive evergreen taking center stage in the front yard, I don't know. What he was referring to was a tree worthy of standing in Rockefeller Center at Christmas time.

And so, through the eyes of a child, I was reminded that it's all a matter of perspective. Although he and I had been looking in the same direction, at the same time, moving from point A to point B that day, we clearly weren't seeing the same thing. All I could muster as we continued on was

“Wow. That IS a very special tree, Honey. The family that lives there is definitely lucky.” And then a few seconds later, “I’m so glad you noticed.”