

TREES

-SHIRLEY BAUER

The poem captures the simple yet profound connection between humans and trees, presenting them as integral to both childhood joy and the natural environment. Trees are depicted as sources of happiness, creativity, and shelter. They offer a playground for children ("Trees are for children," "Trees are for Hide and Seek"), a place for imagination and leisure ("Trees are to make tree houses in," "Trees are to have tea parties under"), and an element of nature that interacts with the seasons ("Trees are to make cool shade in summer," "Trees are to make no shade in winter").

However, as the poem progresses, there is a subtle shift from this innocent view of trees to one that reflects human exploitation. The line "Trees are to chop down and call, 'TIMBER-R-R!'" introduces the theme of human greed and destruction. The word "TIMBER-R-R," with its drawn-out sound, mimics the fall of a tree but also carries a tone of excitement, as if signalling an opportunity for financial gain. This moment of exuberance symbolizes how humans have reduced trees, once seen as a source of life and happiness, to mere commodities. The excitement of chopping trees for timber contrasts sharply with the earlier appreciation of trees for their beauty and role in nature.

The poem ends with two contrasting statements: "Trees make mothers say, 'What a lovely picture to paint!'" and "Trees make fathers say, 'What a lot of leaves to rake this fall!'" These lines reveal a blend of emotion and responsibility. The mother's sentiment reflects a lingering appreciation of nature's beauty, urging people to see the artistic and intrinsic value of trees. On the other hand, the father's line hints at the responsibility humans must take as caretakers of the environment. While it may seem like a mundane task to rake leaves, it symbolizes a deeper responsibility to maintain and nurture the world around us.

Thus, the poem captures the dual role of trees in human life—as sources of joy and beauty, and as victims of human greed. The use of "TIMBER-R-R" underscores the devastating effects of deforestation, reminding us that the destruction of trees, while profitable for some, is a loss for all. The ending evokes a mixture of nostalgia and duty, leaving readers with a sense of responsibility to protect the natural world.

(TANMOY SAHA)



DECIDUOUS TREE IN FOUR SEASONS

(SOURWOOD TREE)



SPRING



SUMMER



AUTUMN



WINTER

