Finding nature & sanctuary in the city

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Figure *Fagus grandifolia* city sanctuary

MORE ONLINE

Audio

Listen to Dr. Jacobs read this story.

[NPub.org/2qheef](https://npub.org/2qheef)

We move in silence
a small community practicing
slow walking
around jeweled side streets
we don't usually see
no two houses the same—
stone, stucco, brick, clapboard—
each ringed in green, coiffured
flanked by a 2-car garage.
We have passed by them many times
blinded by thoughts
driving us forward or backward,
consuming us.

Today we support each other
with small steps
focusing
cameras clicking
noticing
the lushness, muchness:

fiery maples, click!
pink blossomed cherries, click!
overhead trellises
of limbs and leaves intertwined, click!

We visit the ancient tree,
made into a shrine,
one half acre canopy standing alone
after the church got converted
into condos.

We circumambulate
Fagus grandifolia
(a 150-year-old Copper beech),
its thick roots above ground,
growths bulging on its trunk,
arms reaching into the ether.
We crane our necks
seeing patches of sky blue
through a crown
of red and green.
Smooth skin invites touch.

So we touch
our *recovery mentor*
strong, resilient, thriving
anchoring us
in the now and here

reminding us
Everything changes.

After 20 minutes in Eden
we grow calm
practicing silence
meditation in nature
sparking hope
calming fear.

Seated back in the classroom
pens skate across paper
We move in silence
words untold unfold
until we hear
the bell of mindfulness
3 times ringing
waking us.
We share,
clap, praise
and without ego
rearrange
cut, replace words,
suggest line breaks,
empower verbs.
We are imagining
connecting, changing
starting anew.

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