



# Ravenous

POWER LINES AND TALL TREES do not enjoy a peaceful coexistence for long.

In the wee hours of one morning just a couple of weeks ago, while I was still going about my morning ablutions, a local REC (Rural Electric Coop) truck pulled into our drive. Considering the state of undress with which I greeted the man who exited the driver's side, considering the fact that half of my face was still slathered in shaving cream, he was polite and businesslike as he outlined their plans for a few of the trees on our property.

It seemed there was a very large oak tree, down near the end of our drive, which was threatening the integrity of the power line. After examining the tree for myself, I told him there was a lot of good wood in that tree that I wouldn't want to lose. So he

agreed to clear away all the brush and smaller limbs, but leave the useable wood, once they dropped the tree. To do this they also had to remove two smaller yet still substantial trees to clear the way.

The next morning the two men arrived on-site with a large yellow beast moving on tracks. At the business end was attached not a bucket for scooping dirt, but a muscular steel box containing a heavy shaft bristling with claw-like hammers. It was clear that anything that came into contact with that ravenous whirling maw would be instantly pulverized into oblivion.

Even from up at the house we could not escape the wrenching, chewing din that emanated from the work site. The hideous tearing



Reflections  
by the Pond

No. 408

August 17, 2009

On every hand the foe we find  
Drawn up in dread array.  
Let tents of ease be left behind,  
And onward to the fray.  
Salvation's helmet on each head,  
With truth all girt about,  
The earth shall tremble 'neath our tread,  
And echo with our shout.  
  
To him that overcomes the foe,  
White raiment shall be giv'n.  
Before the angels he shall know  
His name confessed in Heav'n.  
Then onward from the hill of light,  
Our hearts with love aflame,  
We'll vanquish all the hosts of night,  
In Jesus' conqu'ring Name.

Faith is the victory!  
Faith is the victory!  
O glorious victory,  
That overcomes the world.

John H. Yates

noise made by the hammers described the traumatic demise of the brush and trees, and one was glad to be far away from their path of destruction.

When I surveyed the site a few hours later, there was nothing left of the two smaller trees save a carpet of shredded chips upon the ground. They were just gone, as if the trees had never been there. The large oak had been felled, and what was left behind was only the black skeleton of its usable wood; all foliage and smaller limbs had been chewed away.

There is another ravenous maw out there—one that can make the wrenching demolition of my trees seem like the toppling of toothpicks.

Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

1 Peter 5:8

The believer's adversary—Satan—is a brilliant Thespian, a chameleon-like actor who specializes in characters that are winsome, attractive, appealing. Being a liar, and indeed the “father of lies,” one of his most favorite roles is the one in which he masquerades as something the exact opposite of what he truly is.

For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

2 Corinthians 11:13-14

How the devil must chuckle to himself when he fools people into thinking he is some righteous messenger from God, blessed with an abiding innocence, love for all, wishing only the best for all peoples. Why, he just wants to be everyone's best friend, everyone's good buddy, everyone's favorite uncle.

But what he is in truth is a ravenous beast, prowling here and there, everywhere, hunched forward, eyes empty and cold, hungry, searching for easy prey.

Our world is filled with people who have been fooled by Satan, and the real tragedy is that it does not stop there. For the devil is not

satisfied with clever trickery; his amusements and passions run far darker than that. He is satisfied only when he has *consumed* a life, when he has torn it limb from limb, destroyed its joy, destroyed its peace, destroyed its hope.

The good news is that while believers can be periodically fooled by Satan, they cannot be consumed by him. For the Christian, Satan is already defeated.

By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the *spirit* of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.

1 John 4:2-4

And there will come a day when even his momentary influence will be utterly destroyed for all eternity.

And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Revelation 20:10

Until that day, we are to stay well clear of all limb-hungry tree destroyers—and well clear of the wily, lying, ravenous adversary, who wishes us only harm.

Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

James 4:7-8a

