Spirit of the woods

by Kieyn Parks

Kent and lilum Beckett lived on a quiet block. The sidewalks of the block are lined with dogwood trees. In the spring the dogwood trees bloomed with brilliant pink flowers from one end of the street all the

way to the next. The road and sidewalk would be covers in layers of pink flower petals that looked like pink snow. The air throughout the neighborhood smelled like sweet perfume due to the dogwood blossoms.

Every day, Kent and Lilum would go outside to play in the sea of fallen petals with the other kids from the block. They would pile up the petals into a great big heap and run through it.

When one heap was sufficiently destroyed, they would build another heap. For the neighborhood children it was great fun to play in the heaps of flowers for hours unending. There were 14 houses on the street that Kent

and Lilum lived on. Seven houses on either side. The name of the street is Mulberry Street. Mulberry had the biggest dogwood trees in the neighborhood because it was the first block to be built when the neighborhood was developed

many decades ago when the tree was planted. Many of the families on Mulberry never moved, passing the property down through the generations. The house that Kent and Lilum lived in was recently bought by their parents William

and Sheryl Beckett. It was an entirely new environment for the Beckett’s, but they liked the neighborhoods quiet traditional appeal and the ancient looking trees that lined the street gave the block it’s unique character. Mulberry Street was known

as the spooky street among the kids in the neighborhood. Mulberry has one entrance on the east side of the block. At the other end of Mulberry is a dead end and beyond that is undeveloped lands filled with big trees

and undergrowth. There is a footpath to enter the forested area just beyond the curb at the dead end. About 20 meters in from the beginning of the foot path is the start of trapper’s hiking trails. Trapper’s

trail is very popular with local hikers. Once you enter the trail head it’s almost like a different world beneath the forest canopy. In the daytime the tall canopy is penetrated by streams of light like laser beams from the sky,

this creates a 3 dimensional checker board effect of light and shadow protruding from the ground and reaching up through the canopy. Pillars of light and shadow that seemingly forms the foundation of the world above. The forest floor had

some undergrowth but it was mostly sparse and flat. Even though you could easily walk in any direction with little hinderance there was a distinct and well-worn path for perspective travelers. It was obvious that most hikers did no stray

from the well grooved out way. At night the forest became the blackest place on earth devoid of all-natural light; like a loveless place full of sorrow. During the day the trails are full of hikers and the children are free to go in and out of the forest as they please. At night it

was a different story for the children; none of whom are brave enough to even venture close to the tree line. The children would dare each other to enter the trails at night but none would take up the

challenge; Stories of ghosts in the woods keep them at bay. The Beckett’s lived in house #35 which was the last house on the block just before the foot path. The property line of the Beckett’s land butts right

up against the forest boundary. The house on the property was a comfortable distance away from the trees and was surrounded by a wooden fence right-way-round. On the forest side of the fence there was a clearing about

4 meters wide that ran the full length of the fence along the forest boundary. The only break in the fence came at the front of the property facing the street; The entire length of the front is opened to the street and features a

paved driveway and cobble stone walkway up to the front door. A white mail box marked the beginning of the walkway from at the edge of the sidewalk. The neighborhood children were all drawn to the Beckett’s front yard where they would all play till dusk.

Then they would move to the back yard for a couple more hours until it was time to go to their own respective homes. Nobody new why this property was so special with the kids, there was nothing special or

particularly remarkable about the house or the yard save for the fact that there was a spooky forest next to it. Kids are drawn to the unknown just as long as they can observe the danger from a safe distance and the fence surrounding the property may have given them an extra air of security.

One of the games the children played