

# People of the Tree

by Thomas A. McKean and Melanie Jones

This is the story of the people of the tree.

Long, long ago, in a land far, far away, there lived the Tree People. The Tree People were ruled by King Thomas and Queen Melnie. The land of the Tree People was a big and beautiful island.

In the days before King Thomas and Queen Melnie, the land of the Tree People was ruled by an evil prince not yet crowned king, who's name was Archibald. Archibald was not thrilled by the lush and powerful rain forest that was the pride and joy of the people. Prince Archibald, evil prince not yet crowned king, had only one desire; he enjoyed the feel of the sunshine on a hot summer day.

Although plenty of sun was yet available in the land of the Tree People, it was just not enough for evil Prince Archibald. So Archibald ordered that all the trees in the forest be cut down to allow the sunlight in on the land of the Tree People.

But there were those who did not agree with the evil prince. The leaders of this group were two young cadets known as Thomas and Melnie. As children, Thomas and Melnie played among the trees and had become very close friends. Not only with each other, but with the trees as well. For you see, in the land of the Tree People, the trees could talk just as clearly and as plainly as you or I.

When Thomas and Melnie heard that the trees were to be cut down, they ran at once into the forest to ask advice of the Great Oak Tree. Now the Great Oak Tree was older and wiser than any other tree in the forest. In fact, that oak tree was older and wiser than any other tree in the world.

The Great Oak Tree told Thomas and Melnie of a legend written long, long ago. It stated that once, the trees in the forest were the same as any other tree. But one day that all changed. For one day, a visitor came to the land of the Tree People. But this was no ordinary visitor. No, this was a special visitor who came from afar. He was traveling on a long journey, and he stopped for the night to rest. Since the trees provided shelter for the visitor, he granted them one wish. The trees thought about it very hard. Then they knew what that wish would be. They wished to always be able to talk to the people who passed by their land. So the visitor opened his backpack, and sprinkled his magic seeds all over the forest. And before you knew it, the trees were talking!

Now it had come to pass that in the following centuries that the story had become legend. People had made homes in the land of the trees, but few believed the tale. Only the children had the faith it took to hear the trees talk to them. Thomas,

Melnie, and the Great Oak Tree came up with a plan. When the evil prince not yet crowned king and his crew came to chop down the magic trees, the trees would talk and scare them away!

And that is exactly what happened on that fateful day. Many of the trees spoke for the first time in hundreds of years. And they all scared the evil prince not yet crowned king out of the land. But now the land was without a king or queen. So the Great Oak Tree elected Thomas as king, and Melnie became the queen. But before that could happen, Thomas and Melnie had to be married. So the ceremony was held in the forest, and all the trees decorated themselves with beautiful flowers for the occasion. Everyone in the land turned out for the wedding, and it was the biggest day in the history of the Tree People. The Great Oak Tree performed the ceremony, and Thomas and Melnie were married and sworn in as king and queen. And through their loving kindness towards the trees and the people, they became loved and cherished by all.

And they all lived happily ever after.