The Giving Tree

By Shel Silverstein

Once there was a tree....

and she loved a little boy.

And everyday the boy would come

and he would gather her leaves

and make them into crowns

and play king of the forest.

He would climb up her trunk

and swing from her branches

and eat apples.

And they would play hide-and-go-seek.

And when he was tired,

he would sleep in her shade.

And the boy loved the tree....

very much.

And the tree was happy.

But time went by.

And the boy grew older.

And the tree was often alone.

Then one day the boy came to the tree

and the tree said, "Come, Boy, come and

climb up my trunk and swing from my

branches and eat apples and play in my

shade and be happy."

"I am too big to climb and play" said

the boy.

"I want to buy things and have fun.

I want some money?"

"I'm sorry," said the tree, "but I

have no money.

I have only leaves and apples.

Take my apples, Boy, and sell them in

the city. Then you will have money and

you will be happy."

And so the boy climbed up the

tree and gathered her apples

and carried them away.

And the tree was happy.

But the boy stayed away for a long time....

and the tree was sad.

And then one day the boy came back

and the tree shook with joy

and she said, "Come, Boy, climb up my trunk

and swing from my branches and be happy."

"I am too busy to climb trees," said the boy.

"I want a house to keep me warm," he said.

"I want a wife and I want children,

and so I need a house.

Can you give me a house?"

" I have no house," said the tree.

"The forest is my house,

but you may cut off

my branches and build a

house. Then you will be happy."

And so the boy cut off her branches

and carried them away

to build his house.

And the tree was happy.

But the boy stayed away for a long time.

And when he came back,

the tree was so happy

she could hardly speak.

"Come, Boy," she whispered,

"come and play."

"I am too old and sad to play,"

said the boy.

"I want a boat that will

take me far away from here.

Can you give me a boat?"

"Cut down my trunk

and make a boat," said the tree.

"Then you can sail away...

and be happy."

And so the boy cut down her trunk

and made a boat and sailed away.

And the tree was happy

... but not really.

And after a long time

the boy came back again.

"I am sorry, Boy,"

said the tree," but I have nothing

left to give you -

My apples are gone."

"My teeth are too weak

for apples," said the boy.

"My branches are gone,"

said the tree. " You

cannot swing on them - "

"I am too old to swing

on branches," said the boy.

"My trunk is gone, " said the tree.

"You cannot climb - "

"I am too tired to climb" said the boy.

"I am sorry," sighed the tree.

"I wish that I could give you something....

but I have nothing left.

I am just an old stump.

I am sorry...."

"I don't need very much now," said the boy.

"just a quiet place to sit and rest.

I am very tired."

"Well," said the tree, straightening

herself up as much as she could,

"well, an old stump is good for sitting and resting

Come, Boy, sit down. Sit down and rest."

And the boy did.

And the tree was happy.