

Wild Magnolia

She woke up this morning frightened and angry like a rape victim from a coma and sat on her front stoop. She cried through her fingers peeping out to glance at the cute young men that walked by, her boo-hoos increasing with intensity and drama as they got closer and trailed off to whimpers and sniffles as they walked away.

“This town will eat you alive,” I thought as I passed, “This town will eat you alive.”

When you stress to find the wild Magnolia, pack a lunch. Your feet will get wet from the torrent and you will eat crumbs from the bottom of a brown paper bag long before you see the sun again. But, standing in the shade of her, you will know you have conquered something great. No well-focused photograph or blurry negative – no vane attempt at poetry or prose will ever capture the hint of the Magnolia flower on the wind as you stand there, sweaty and tired and breathless.

You did not create the Magnolia or the torrent or the brown paper bag. What you have done is to create the wonderful possibility of the experience of the three – each with its own purpose that make up the whole - no one more important than the others. And in that moment, the best you can hope for, the most you can pray for is the existential experience of knowing where you are.

Now go home.