

A Love Letter to the Census

If a tree falls in a forest and no one else is around to hear it, did it fall? Did it matter?
Will it be missed?

Would a mess of dandelions and moss spring from its decaying bark? Would it house
slimy grubs? Juicy enough for the prettiest of blue birds to eat and then regurgitate to
feed its blue babies?

Or would it just fall? With no progress being made; the life cycle being broken.

Every morning, I pack my bags and embark on a great adventure. I have a routine, but
nothing ever seems to be set in stone. I'm still as excited as ever to live--to try new
things.

On my drive to work, I think of you--and I think of how much you matter. How much
you think--no, know-- that *we* matter. Will we all have grub to eat in the morning? Will
you help decorate our community with beautiful wildflowers? Or will our community
remain stagnant? Just a decaying tree in the forest, as others build skyscrapers that
tower over us and noisy factories that contaminate our water supply?

You make me feel heard. You make *us* feel heard.
Progress is still progress, even if it confuses human beings for numbers on a map.

While you might not know my name, or about how much my mom loves roses, you still
care.

Not quite in the heart of Texas, but the beating, bleeding heart of Texas located on the
border by the sea, you listen to its steady beats-- and you supply.

While we only meet every ten years, you always supply. Whether it be jobs, schools,
supermarkets, or hospitals, it's all because of you. You let people know that we're here.
We are often forgotten, but we are still here-- fighting.

And while we only meet every ten years, you always make sure it's easy to reach you--
always oh so eager to listen. Whether I send a letter or I call or maybe I find you online,
you validate me and you validate my community.

You manifest yourself into the House, and we're represented. I'm represented. Thank you. A million times, thank you.

If a tree falls in a forest and no one was around to hear it, it still made a sound. And you make sure the whole world knows and plants a new one.