

excerpt from

Reflections

by Patricia Miller 2014

Ferns

Forest floors decked out in green finery, different ferns, lone species, and ground level camouflage as far as you can see. This is the fern forest of the Porkies, lush and magical, rich in contrast and kind, fronds dancing in the slightest current of summer air. An amazing bursting forth of green where, short months before, the dark loam and deep pine needles were bare to sun and snow.

Now the aspects glow verdant with ferns, a myriad of heights, shapes, fronds, and growth patterns. These I believe to be Cinnamon ferns, one of the popular varieties in the park. Ferns have graced the world's woods for as long as 300 M years and although most of those species are extinct today, the modern 12,000 types of ferns are their grandchildren. Though neither flower nor seed begins a new generation, spores fall and float and become the next wave of intricate fronds to grace the woods. This forest ballerina is lovely, green, and ancient; what a tale their lives can tell.