



# Living in the Woods in a Tree: Remembering Blaze Foley (North Texas Lives of Musicians)

*Sybil Rosen*

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*Living in the Woods in a Tree* is an intimate glimpse into the turbulent life of Texas music legend Blaze Foley (1949–1989), seen through the eyes of Sybil Rosen, the woman for whom he wrote his most widely known song, “If I Could Only Fly.” It captures the exuberance of their fleeting idyll in a tree house in the Georgia woods during the countercultural 1970s. Rosen offers a firsthand witnessing of Foley’s transformation from a reticent hippie musician to the enigmatic singer/songwriter who would live and die outside society’s rules. While Foley’s own performances are only recently being released, his songs have been covered by Merle Haggard, Lyle Lovett, and John Prine. When he first encountered “If I Could Only Fly,” Merle Haggard called it “the best country song I’ve heard in fifteen years.”

In a work that is part-memoir, part-biography, Rosen struggles to finally come to terms with Foley’s myth and her role in its creation. Her tracing of his impact on her life navigates a lovers’ roadmap along the permeable boundary between life and death. A must-read for all Blaze Foley and Texas music fans, as well as romantics of all ages, *Living in the Woods in a Tree* is an honest and compassionate portrait of the troubled artist and his reluctant muse.

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