

Out of the Woods

by [Paul Willis](#) in the [May 2025](#) issue

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In our meeting last night, you kept saying
we were almost out of the woods. But why
would we want to get out of the woods?
Most days, that is where I'd rather be.
So why not say we are almost *back* in the woods—

almost there among shaded streams and ferns
and violets and hemlocks feathering the skies?
Out of the woods? By that you must mean
twelve-lane freeways and parking structures
and Costco carts and Zoom appointments

and hour-long security lines in airport terminals.
You must mean ads for miracle weight loss
and the eternal voice of Siri and tastefully planned
communities for assisted living and committee
meetings like the one in which you kept saying

we were almost out of the woods.
So take your pick. As for me and my house—
or tent, rather—we are content to be back
with the dryads, dancing with those daffodils,
the chickadees, the stars still shining in the trees.