

Speaking Tree
by Joy Harjo

I had a beautiful dream I was dancing with a tree.
—Sandra Cisneros

Some things on this earth are unspeakable:
Genealogy of the broken—
A shy wind threading leaves after a massacre,
Or the smell of coffee and no one there—

Some humans say trees are not sentient beings,
But they do not understand poetry—

Nor can they hear the singing of trees when they are fed by
Wind, or water music—
Or hear their cries of anguish when they are broken and
bereft—

Now I am a woman longing to be a tree, planted in a moist,
dark earth
Between sunrise and sunset—

I cannot walk through all realms—
I carry a yearning I cannot bear alone in the dark—

What shall I do with all this heartache?

The deepest-rooted dream of a tree is to walk
Even just a little ways, from the place next to the doorway—
To the edge of the river of life, and drink—

I have heard trees talking, long after the sun has gone down:

*Imagine what would it be like to dance close together
In this land of water and knowledge...*

To drink deep what is undrinkable.