

## **The Cottonwood**

Sandy Oklahoma soil,  
Decades of dust dug by greed drove  
Grief and graves for many,  
But I am a cottonwood.

Roots in shallow soil,  
planted not by fertile farming but by stubbornness and grace.  
I know the Arkansas is not the Mississippi.  
Arching, striving, lazy, even cruel  
But it is mine.

I, a cottonwood gnarled and twisted by the wind,  
stubbornly grasping for sanity.  
I know when to bend into instability, a precariously perched blue heron amidst  
Drops of snow in summer.  
Pink splashes across the vast Oklahoma sky and  
God says here, too, Creation—  
I've never listened to those who said not to grow roots.