

What Cedars Keep

This cedar carries everything on its journey
to the sky – the creek that seeps silently from banks
to deep root tips, insects in crevices the nuthatch listens for,
even the metal bones of this tractor. Its trunks swell
and engulf until they share the same body.
It just appears to be still to our quick eyes.

Cedars record entirety in their rings and breakage,
cracks and peelings: the stump perched on a crumbled log,
the brief stories of all who have been near.
Tremors of your footsteps on the forest floor
are felt in every root and mapped,
vibrate up through the newest needles. Your breath

soft as a mist on its bark-skin reverberates along
this body that takes in every encounter, all
that walks, flows, flies, pauses.

--Eileen Walsh Duncan

<https://cdcpoetry.wordpress.com/2018/03/27/trees-and-their-forbidden-things-eileen-walsh-duncan/>