

the old tree

- after George Oppen

Dampened by the yawn of canyon wind, and bark so twisted, your tree made itself a monument
made itself an obelisk. That is to say
it is almost entirely air. Telling tales of past body mass,
and seeds sent South.

For us, it is the flag set forth, a marker for our not reached islands –
it will beckon with dry digits and porcelain branches. It will stretch.
To see, we will climb bottom branches – we will crisscross in its shadow.
To remember, what is buried there, and all the times we walked
the times we hummed soft prayers.
Where bones are hidden beneath earth—roots tell the story.
Do you believe, believe the shape
can carry our weight?