**Live Oak**  
*Candace Howard*

Two eagles soar in flight  
Yet are rooted to the ground.

As one's struck down, the rest stand tall  
And return the sea's glare.  
They are neither indifferent nor cold--  
They simply exist,  
And they exist to tell the world our story.

The sadness of a fallen oak extends beyond its branches.  
Its bark, white in death, haunts the tattered world.

Who can find hope in broken branches?  
Lifetimes—an eternity struck once with lightning speed.

But who can peer around their lifeless boughs at the ever-changing sea?

No, I am mesmerized by this oak.  
This dead symbol  
That no longer says death  
That sings to my faintest hope  
That tells the world:  
Look at me and smile.  
For the others live  
And thrive  
And raise their arms to heaven.