



by annette cowart, autumn 2023

White Oak Arabesque

I'm gone now...
Yet seen
Hawk's call honoring

Free from illness
Free from survival
Off the seasonal cycle

My bones remain
A settled calm in my architecture
After an early departure in the first 300

I still share my naked arabesque
A lifetime of dance memory
Buoyed by companion walnut, ash and spice bush
Whose thriving foliage embrace me

Woodpecker drums, churrs and purrs
Bat buddies still count on my cover
The next generation of coons have a clear shot to their cozy hollows

I will be loved until my last bone is offered up...
And long after

Yesterday I lost another arm
Now resting in leaf litter
Termites and ants will soon march in
Fungi and lichen looking forward

My sibling across the path, at the pond
Once fully decorated and noble
Mirrors me
Standing proud, reminding community sentients of her presence

Across the pond stands young cousin Willow Oak
Handsome, vibrant, vital host

And further up the hill
My dearest friend extends the widest reach of any oak for miles
A bridge... between our original stewards and newer kin humans
Chock full of fruit, ready to drop
Carrying forward our kindred witness into the next 300; our sacred grove lives on.