

THE WISHING TREE

I stand neither in the wilderness
nor fairyland,

but in the fold
of a green hill,

the tilt from one parish
into another.

To look at me
through a smirr of rain

is to taste the iron
in your own blood,

because I bear
the common currency

of longing: each wish
each secret visitation.



My limbs lift, scabbed
with greenish coins; I draw
into my slow wood, fleur-
de-lys, the enthroned Britannia.

Beyond, the land reaches
toward the Atlantic.

And though I'm poisoned,
choking on the small change

of human hope, daily
beaten into me, look:

I'm still alive,
in fact, in bud.

KATHLEEN JAMIE

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