

**I Saw in Louisiana a Live-Oak Growing  
by Walt Whitman**

I saw in Louisiana a live-oak growing,  
All alone stood it and the moss hung down from the branches,  
Without any companion it grew there uttering joyous leaves of dark green,  
And its look, rude, unbending, lusty, made me think of myself,  
But I wonder'd how it could utter joyous leaves standing alone there without its  
friend near, for I knew I could not,  
And I broke off a twig with a certain number of leaves upon it, and twined around  
it a little moss,  
And brought it away, and I have placed it in sight in my room,  
It is not needed to remind me as of my own dear friends,  
(For I believe lately I think of little else than of them,)  
Yet it remains to me a curious token, it makes me think of manly love;  
For all that, and though the live-oak glistens there in Louisiana solitary in a wide flat  
space,  
Uttering joyous leaves all its life without a friend a lover near,  
I know very well I could not.

Source: Walt Whitman, "I Saw in Louisiana a Live-Oak Growing," *Leaves of Grass*, 1892.