“Ghost Dance”

By Sara Littlecrow-Russell

Two hundred seventy
    Ghost Dancers died dreaming
    That humanity would drown
    In a flood of White sins.

Then the renewed earth
    Would reclaim city and town,
    Leaving only Ghost Dancers
    And those who lived by nature’s laws.

History books say the threat is gone.
    The Ghost Dance died with the ancestors—
    Wovoka and his sacred dream
    Were destroyed.

Each time it rains,
    I go out to the sidewalk,
    Where the tree roots
    Have broken the concrete
    Listening to the water’s whispering:

“It is coming soon.”


Source: The Secret Powers of Naming (University of Arizona Press, 2006)