

THINKSDAY

## *Twisted*

June 4, 2026



*“Their bright faces, which follow the sun, will listen, and all those rows of seeds — each one a new life! — hope for a deeper acquaintance.” — Mary Oliver*

*It could be that the wind load is from the west, and the sunny leafier side faces south so that together they gradually twist the tree in this counter-clockwise pattern. It could be the consequence of the Coriolis effect (something about the earth’s rotation, and the spin direction of hurricanes... yadda yadda yadda... like the tree, most of it is over my head). Or perhaps it arises from genetic anomalies or specific environmental factors. Could it be simply a marvelous adaptation strategy to strengthen the tree the way twisted rope has greater strength than simple straight fibers?*

*There are an estimated 73,000 different species of trees and the variety between and among them is incalculable. There is only one species of humankind, yet the variations between and among them are even more staggering. It might be interesting, and probably*

*useful, to know why some trees have twisted trunks, and others of the same species do not. Why some people carry hate and envy, and some love and compassion. But those abstract questions are not what pull hardest on me.*

*Each person, tree, shorebird, fox, and every other living thing has its unique story of its life — of the wind, and the adversity and advantages of our environments, of our roots and our shoots, of turning our faces to the sun. I want to understand the general and universal by way of the individual and personal experiences, not the other way around. I'd sooner join Whitman and glide out of the learn'd astronomer's lecture and instead "look up in perfect silence at the stars<sup>1</sup>." I'd rather go with Mary to visit the Sunflowers as they tell us about "the long work of turning their lives into a celebration<sup>2</sup>." I hope to celebrate you.*

<sup>1</sup> *When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer — Walt Whitman*

<sup>2</sup> *The Sunflowers — Mary Oliver*

***Happy Thinksday***