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# The star, the rock, and the pine: Willa Cather's 'Before Breakfast' and Rachel Carson's The Sense of Wonder

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## Abstract

The starting point of this reflection is Willa Cather's short story "Before Breakfast". I wish to highlight the relationships between Cather's and Carson's texts. My suggestion is that both "Before Breakfast" and The Sense of Wonder foster a relational view of humans and some of the continuous and perennial elements on Earth, valuing awe and beauty in nature. Moreover, both texts depict the natural world as a place of spiritual renewal and inner healing, a perspective in tune with the current fields of ecocriticism and the Environmental Humanities. Although using different perspectives and styles, both women explore ways of moving us away from merely anthropocentric value systems, increasing our sensitivity to the more-than-human world. Ultimately, both Cather and Carson encourage us "to listen and talk about the voices of the earth" (Carson) and what they mean - the voice of stars, rocks and pines (Cather).

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