

“Do the rocks here know us, do the trees, do the waters of the lakes? Not unless they are addressed by the names they themselves told us to call them in our dreams. Every feature of the land around us spoke its name to an ancestor. Perhaps, in the end, that is all that we are. We Anishinaabeg are the keepers of the names of the earth. And unless the earth is called by the names it gave us humans, won't it cease to love us? And isn't it true that if the earth stops loving us, everyone, not just the Anishinaabeg, will cease to exist? That is why we all must speak our language, nindinawemagonidok, and call everything we see by the name of its spirit. Even the chimoolzamanag, who are trying to destroy us, are depending upon us to remember. Mi'sago'i.”

--Louise Erdrich, *Turtle Mountain Ojibwe*--

