**Wild Geese**

***by Mary Oliver (1935 - )***

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| You do not have to be good. |
| You do not have to walk on your knees |
| for a hundred miles through the desert repenting. |
| You only have to let the soft animal of your body |
| love what it loves. |
| Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine. |
| Meanwhile the world goes on. |
| Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain |
| are moving across the landscapes, |
| over the prairies and the deep trees, |
| the mountains and the rivers. |
| Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air, |
| are heading home again. |
| Whoever you are, no matter how lonely, |
| the world offers itself to your imagination, |
| calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting - |
| over and over announcing your place |
| in the family of things. |