

JENNY MORROW

Glosa for Florence

*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.*

—Mary Oliver, *Wild Geese*

Sometimes a near view of Mars is all it takes
to make your day – oh, there've been dark ones,
but you know how to skirt despair,
take the least stone at your feet, marvel
at its gift. Wrought bark indifferently forgotten,
Salomé, Hamlet, Persuasion,
a weekend with Verdi, a well told tale,
the swish of a paddle or ski.
The world lays itself bare for your celebration:
offers itself to your imagination,

and you're not afraid to be kind. To look
down to the roots with forgiveness and grace.
Unsung, undrummed you've traced the song-
lines
to your least fellow, binding the threads
of our real solitudes.
While we killed time with in-fighting,
you were out planting trees on the skin of the
world
as its sand slipped through, grain after grain.
Life doesn't weigh heavy on your shoulders;
alighting,
it calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting.

You didn't have to do this. You could have
sipped your café on the boulevards,
debating the greats. You could have sat *all day*
in the sun, loving what is easy, not stared
all night at an old Thomson print en route
to a deadline. But you chose to face north,
not east, you chose the forest and all its dark
places,
its caves and occasional glades and we're glad
that you did:
these words and your friends, with love and
with grace,
are over and over announcing your place

in our hearts. Thank you for your angle of light,
for sharing your wonder in planets and rocks.
For celebrating other joys more than your own,
for loving all children as you would have your
own.

At last count they say that your family teemed
with hundreds of children and siblings. But
then—
there's nothing you won't drop to help out a
friend.
But when you need to, come home. Like the
geese, come home.
Sit under the boughs, rest your feet, fold your
wings,
and take your seat *in the family of things.*

Jenny Morrow is a writer, mother, and consultant who lives in Sioux Lookout, Ontario.