**WHEN DEATH COMES**

(by Mary Oliver)

When death comes

like the hungry bear in autumn;

when death comes and takes all the bright coins from his purse

to buy me, and snaps the purse shut;

when death comes like the measle-pox,

when death comes

like an iceberg between the shoulder blades,

I want to step through the door full of curiosity, wondering;

what is it going to be like, that cottage of darkness?

And therefore, I look upon everything as a sisterhood or a brotherhood

and I look upon time as no more than an idea;

and I consider eternity as another possibility;

and I think of each life as a flower, as common

as a field daisy, and as singular,

and each name a comfortable music in the mouth,

ending, as all music does, toward silence,

and each body a lion of courage

and something precious to the earth.

When it’s over, I want to say; all my life

I was a bride married to amazement.

I was the bridegroom taking the world into my arms.

When it’s over, I don’t want to wonder

if I have made of my life something particular and real,

I don’t want to find myself sighing and frightened

or full of argument.

I don’t want to end up

simply having visited this world.