**Snow Geese by Mary Oliver**

Oh, to love what is lovely, and will not last!   
What a task  
to ask   
of anything, or anyone,   
yet it is ours,   
and not by the century or the year, but by the hours.   
One fall day I heard  
above me, and above the sting of the wind, a sound  
I did not know, and my look shot upward; it was   
a flock of snow geese, winging it  
faster than the ones we usually see,   
and, being the color of snow, catching the sun   
so they were, in part at least, golden. I   
held my breath  
as we do  
sometimes  
to stop time  
when something wonderful  
has touched us   
as with a match,   
which is lit, and bright,   
but does not hurt  
in the common way,   
but delightfully,   
as if delight  
were the most serious thing  
you ever felt.   
The geese  
flew on,   
I have never seen them again.   
Maybe I will, someday, somewhere.  
Maybe I won't.  
It doesn't matter.  
What matters  
is that, when I saw them,   
I saw them  
as through the veil, secretly, joyfully, clearly.