

# I Looked Up

*by Mary Oliver*

I looked up and there it was  
among the green branches of the pitch pines—

thick bird,  
a ruffle of fire trailing over the shoulders and down the back—

color of copper, iron, bronze—  
lighting up the dark branches of the pine.

What misery to be afraid of death.  
What wretchedness, to believe only in what can be proven.

When I made a little sound  
it looked at me, then it looked past me.

Then it rose, the wings enormous and opulent,  
and, as I said, wreathed in fire.