"THE POET THINKS ABOUT THE DONKEY"

Mary Oliver

On the outskirts of Jerusalem
the donkey waited.
Not especially brave, or filled with understanding,
he stood and waited.

How horses, turned out into the meadow,
  leap with delight!
How doves, released from their cages,
  clatter away, splashed with sunlight.

But the donkey, tied to a tree as usual, waited.
Then he let himself be led away.
Then he let the stranger mount.

Never had he seen such crowds!
And I wonder if he at all imagined what was to happen.
Still, he was what he had always been: small, dark, obedient.

I hope, finally, he felt brave.
I hope, finally, he loved the man who rode so lightly upon him,
as he lifted one dusty hoof and stepped, as he had to, forward.