

## MORNING

Morning arrives on her  
rosy slippers, padding across the  
sky. The full moon fades. From  
the back door my feet  
step out onto sandy soil and angle  
up into pinon studded hills.

My eyes focus down to avoid dangers –  
cacti, sharp rocks, burrows – and to look  
for clues of creatures that wandered  
about while I tried in vain to sleep.

The coyotes were out in force, yowling,  
drunk from milk light illuminating  
familiar routes. Paw prints  
and scat litter the path. Spring  
spawned new pups.

A garden of mule deer must have sprung  
up overnight, grazed on creamy  
Yucca blossom petals, cautious  
as they slipped through the silent  
summer night air.

I recognize tracks of small four-toed  
kangaroo rats who sneak  
out of underground burrows nightly,  
stuff seeds into cheek pouches and foot drum warnings to kin  
at any whiff of predator.

I head back to the house for breakfast  
although already satisfied deeper  
than food can satisfy. My eyes focus down  
and I pass my foot prints going out. If  
you didn't know who made those tracks  
would you guess that her heart was lifted this  
gloriously ordinary morning? That for an instant she held  
a thimble of wildness in her fiery palm?

Carol LoCastro, December 2008

What I like about Mary Oliver's poems is her subjects, usually having to do with nature,  
and the way she relates her observations about nature with her inner musings. Her tone is

one of joy, almost rapture, and celebration of life. There is not much I dislike about her poetry. In fact, I can't think of anything!