

# *To a Willow*

*“Mother, dear Mother, how do you stand so straight and so tall?”*

Blessed is the Willow, monarch of our acreage, and loveliest of trees. Blessed is this patch of turf, for only God could have appointed such elegant, matchless symmetry to an earthly form. The noble stone arch in the south garden wall is hardly noble enough to keep watch, protecting the hallowed soil covering her sprawling, expressive roots – our blood. A moment spent beneath her loving branches, reclining against the familiar, gentle slope next to the water’s edge calms my soul...and I remember who I am.

Blessed are the little ones who’ve spent an afternoon learning and playing and growing beneath the Willow’s luminous canopy – the midday sun filtered through a thousand leaves, like emerald stained-glass, painting the tops of little white sneakers with pale, apple green light. Her long arms sweep over the peaceful, shaded earth like a straw broom – tidying up before the magical lull of naptime and soap operas.