

The Wild Geese

by Wendell Berry
(1934–present)

Horseback on Sunday morning,
harvest over, we taste persimmon
and wild grape, sharp sweet
5 of summer's end. In time's maze
over fall fields, we name names
that went west from here, names
that rest on graves. We open
a persimmon seed to find the tree
10 that stands in promise,
pale, in the seed's marrow.
Geese appear high over us,
pass, and the sky closes. Abandon,
as in love or sleep, holds
15 them to their way, clear
in the ancient faith: what we need
is here. And we pray, not
for new earth or heaven, but to be
quiet in heart, and in eye,
20 clear. What we need is here.