

## Mother Willow

*Karen Kelsay*

You are the gentle willow, who I often  
thought looked weak. Your strong-willed  
child that made her loud debut among  
your branches, hanging

in the adolescent wind, has grown.  
Your leaves have turned a softer lemon-green.  
Sparrows gather on your quiet sleeves  
to nest. It's peaceful in your presence.

Once, I could not see the fine lacework of shadows  
that you cast. Your bark is deep with lines,  
and catkin clusters free themselves  
to float across the twilight's dark divide

where little drowsy seeds prevail  
along the moonlit trails.