Violets
by Mary Oliver

Down by the rumbling creek and the tall trees—
    where I went truant from school three days a week
    and therefore broke the record—
there were violets as easy in their lives
    as anything you have ever seen
    or leaned down to intake the sweet breath of.
Later, when the necessary houses were built
    they were gone, and who would give significance
    to their absence.
Oh, violets, you did signify, and what shall take
    your place?

From Evidence (Beacon Press, 2009)