

# 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)