

September 9

Tides,

by Mary Oliver, published in *A Thousand Mornings*, 2012, Penguin Press

Every day the sea
blue gray green lavender
pulls away leaving the harbor's
dark-cobbled undercoat

slick and rutted and worm-riddled, the gulls
walk there among old whalebones, the white
spines of fish blink from the strandy stew
as the hours tick over; and then

far out the faint, sheer
line turns, rustling over the slack,
the outer bars, over the green-furred flats, over
the clam beds, slippery logs,

barnacle-studded stones, dragging
the shining sheets forward, deepening,
pushing, wreathing together
wave and seaweed, their piled curvatures

spilling over themselves, lapping
blue gray green lavender, never
resting, not ever but fashioning shore,
continent, everything.

And here you may find me
on almost any morning
walking along the shore so
light-footed so casual.