

My Work is Loving the World

[My Work is Loving the World](#)

by **Mary Oliver**

from [Thirst](#), *Poems by Mary Oliver*

*My work is loving the world.
Here the sunflowers, there the hummingbird –
equal seekers of sweetness.
Here the quickening yeast; there the blue plums.
Here the clam deep in the speckled sand.*

*Are my boots old? Is my coat torn?
Am I no longer young and still not half-perfect? Let me
keep my mind on what matters,
which is my work,*

*which is mostly standing still and learning to be
astonished.*

*The phoebe, the delphinium.
The sheep in the pasture, and the pasture.
Which is mostly rejoicing, since all ingredients are here,*

*Which is gratitude, to be given a mind and a heart
and these body-clothes,
a mouth with which to give shouts of joy
to the moth and the wren, to the sleepy dug-up clam,
telling them all, over and over, how it is
that we live forever.*

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