

Strewn

by [Barbara Crooker](#) in the [June 30, 2009](#) issue

It'd been a long winter, rags of snow hanging on; then, at the end
of April, an icy nor'easter, powerful as a hurricane. But now I've landed
on the coast of Maine, visiting a friend who lives two blocks from the
ocean,
and I can't believe my luck, out this mild morning, race-walking along the
strand.

Every dog within fifty miles is off-leash, running for the sheer dopey joy
of it.

No one's in the water, but walkers and shellers leave their tracks on the
hardpack.

The flat sand shines as if varnished in a painting. Underfoot, strewn, are
broken

bits and pieces, deep indigo mussels, whorls of whelk, chips of purple
and white wampum, hinges of quahog, fragments of flat gray sand
dollars.

Nothing whole, everything broken, washed up here, stranded.

Light pours down, a rinse of lemon on a cold plate
of oysters. All of us, broken, some way or other. All of us
dazzling in the brilliant slanting light.