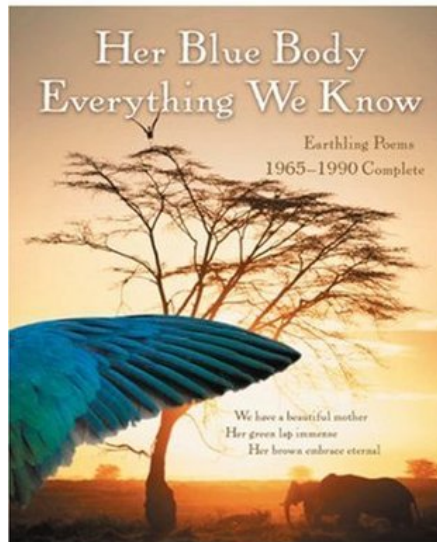


Alice Walker



## Her Blue Body Everything We Know: Earthling Poems 1965-1990 Complete

*Alice Walker*

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# Her Blue Body Everything We Know: Earthling Poems 1965-1990 Complete

*Alice Walker*

## **Her Blue Body Everything We Know: Earthling Poems 1965-1990 Complete** Alice Walker

Walker's complete poems, including new and previously unpublished verse, collected for the first time-with author's notes that provide historical perspective on spiritual and political issues of the last three decades. This title has been selected as a Common Core Text Exemplar (Grades 9-10, Poetry)

## **Her Blue Body Everything We Know: Earthling Poems 1965-1990 Complete Details**

Date : Published May 17th 2004 by Mariner Books (first published April 1st 1991)

ISBN : 9780156028615

Author : Alice Walker

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Genre : Poetry, Cultural, African American, American, African American Literature, Feminism

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# From Reader Review Her Blue Body Everything We Know: Earthling Poems 1965-1990 Complete for online ebook

## Jerome K says

I wouldn't say Alice Walker is the best poet out there. But there's something in her poems that I haven't found in anyone else's. It's very effortless and artless even. Her poems are like fresh spring water, or clean morning sunlight. There's a lot of pain in here but it never overwhelms. Her poems are one big act of forgiveness. I prefer them to her fiction these days.

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## Melissa says

Not for the faint of heart. Revolutionary in the fearlessness that drips from every line. These works definitely provide insight into who Alice Walker unapologetically is and what life events have formed her voice and hence inspired her novels and stories.

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## Iris says

I loved this book. I mean, **loved** this book. It was the first book of grown-up poetry I remember ever reading, and I was thrilled to my bones to read about sex, black hair, poverty, revolution, and to read poetry about writing poetry. As an 11-year-old in suburban Salt Lake City--an 11-year-old self-described poet living in suburban Salt Lake City-- this book opened doors for me, and made me feel not so alone.

I reread it. It has shining, beautiful moments. It has a lot of sentimental value for me. But.... it feels like someone just thinking to themselves, only with line-breaks. I appreciate the conversant value of it, and can appreciate it for what it is and the niche it occupies, but it doesn't blow me away.

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## Nik McGrath says

I first read "A Woman is Not a Potted Plant" as a teenager, and it left a great impression on me. Re-reading Walker's poems have given me a renewed sense of their meaning.

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## Beth says

A beautiful collection of Walker's poetry. Some of these are perennial favorites of mine, some seem to pop up when I need them most.

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## Debby Zygielbaum says

This is one of my favorite volumes of poetry ever. The title poem still raises the hairs on the back of my neck because it speaks such truth to me.

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## Ronald Wise says

A large collection of poetry by Walker from what seemed to be a darker, less optimistic or confident period of her life. Reading this collection after reading her later works, I could understand better the celebration which seemed evident in her 2003 poetry collection *Absolute Trust in the Goodness of the Earth* and her 2004 novel *Now Is the Time to Open Your Heart*. The poetry in this collection seemed tinted with anger and despair. This book was added to my reading list, along with all her works, after reading her novel mentioned above.

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## Tristan says

This contains the complete text of Walker's first four books of poetry as well as some previously uncollected pieces. Each component book will be treated separately, and then the "new" poems.

Once

[Read review here](#)

Revolutionary Petunias

[Read review here](#)

Good Night Willie Lee, I'll See You In the Morning

[Read review here](#)

Horses Make A Landscape Look More Beautiful

[Read review here](#)

We Have a Beautiful Mother: Previously Uncollected Poems

These poems were most like those of *Horses Make a Landscape Look More Beautiful*. The uncollected poems had some really brilliant moments, and were good, but still lacked the level of lyricism that Walker attained in *Once*. Much of Walker's poetry, throughout the whole collection, felt more like gifted and passionate mini-essays and manifestos than poems that were strictly as such. This is particularly true of "If There Was Any Justice" and the prose poems "My Heart Has Reopened to You" (which really felt like an essay) and "The Right to Life: What can the White Man Say to the Black Woman?" Walker's energy is never in question; she feels deeply and honestly about each and every event, person, and idea she encounters in her poetry and in a poetics of emotion that fiery anger of "The Right to Life" and "We Have a Map of the World", the desperate pride of "Ndebele", and the shining hope of "A Woman is Not a Potted Plant" and "We Have a Beautiful Mother" are perfect examples of distilled truth and feeling. Unfortunately, many of those same poems fall when confronted with a poetics of sound, although "We Have a Map of the World" sings as

much as anything in *Once*:

The old men  
show  
their power  
by exploding  
weapons  
deadly seed  
deep inside  
the body  
of the earth.

They grunt  
that they see God  
in the flash  
that blinds  
them  
and us.

I also liked the imagery and flow of "Ndebele", "A Woman is Not a Potted Plant", and "We Have a Beautiful Mother" each of which is just about to stray into the land of essay rather than of poetry. The combination of prose poems and poems with exceptionally short lines is interesting to see--because these poems were uncollected and written at different times, both poems that seem to depend on a continuous flow of ideas and ones that draw meaning from the pauses and spaces are thrown together, with better and less good examples of both kinds filling the section.

*Her Blue Body Everything We Know* is an interesting look at the development of Alice Walker's poetry between 1965 and 1990, even if the actual poems seemed, at times, to be lacking. Walker's fiction and essays are high on the list of materials to read if her prose maintains the energy of her poetry as they should make better use of her lucidity and fairly straightforward language.

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## **MotherMagic says**

The book I took with me into labor of birthing my son. I adore Alice Walker and wanted her poems with me through that experience. A wonderful collection.

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## **Cyndi Lu says**

I absolutely loved drowning in this book. Alice Walker poured her heart and soul onto these pages to express what it means to be an African American woman in the mid to late Twentieth Century. She writes about exploring her African, Native American, and white ancestry; about finding herself within the segregated South, the Civil Rights movement, and the West Coast; about love, loss, motherhood, and life in general. One of the best collections of poetry I have ever read.

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### **Jennifer Hollett says**

Some of my favorite poetry.

Though I may not always agree with Walker politically, her writing is IMO superb.

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### **Krista the Krazy Kataloguer says**

I LOVE her poetry! She reminds me of Maya Angelou, whom I also love. Their poems speak to my soul, like Langston Hughes' poetry does. Highly recommended!!

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### **Jennifer (aka EM) says**

I love Alice Walker. I love her novels, which read like poems. In fact, before I knew she was a poet, I knew she was a poet.

And I love this volume of her poetry. The title poem is a stunning piece of environmental consciousness coupled with simple, but powerful, images of the earth as a body/the body as the earth. Her sensibility oozes out of these words, even more than in her novels.

It's reprinted on my blog [here](#).

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### **Aimee says**

I have a copy of this book to carry with me when I need a pick me up, and a signed hardcover that lives at home. I've had this book for 10 years at least, and still find Walker's words powerful and nuanced.

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### **Jenny (Reading Envy) says**

This is one of the volumes I had hoarded for National Poetry Month. Alice Walker is better known as the author of *The Color Purple*, but she has written quite a few poems. These span from 1965 and are highly biographical, from her trip to Kenya to her work in voter registration in Mississippi, through relationship ups and downs, up through having children. I had first skimmed through them when I was helping a friend find a poem for his mother's funeral, but getting to have a more careful reading was an even better experience.

Read the entirety of these poems:

Be Nobody's Darling, probably my favorite!

Expect Nothing

Here is a little bit from another one I liked, **Rage**.

"The silence between your words  
rams into me  
like a sword."

And this tiny part of **Listen**:

"Every time you say  
you love me  
I look for shelter."

I really liked segment *vii* from **Exercises from Themes on Life**:

"I like to see you try  
to worm yourself  
away from me  
first you plead  
your age  
as if my young heart  
felt any of the tiredness  
in your bones . . . "

This poem I'll include in its entirety (sensing a theme, hmm Alice?):

### **Forbidden Things**

They say you are not for me,  
and I try, in my resolved but  
barely turning brain,  
to know "they" do not matter,  
these relics of past disasters  
in march against the rebellion  
of our time.

They will fail;  
as all the others have:  
for our fate *will not* be this:  
to smile and salute the pain,  
to limp behind their steel boot  
of happiness,  
grieving for forbidden things.

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