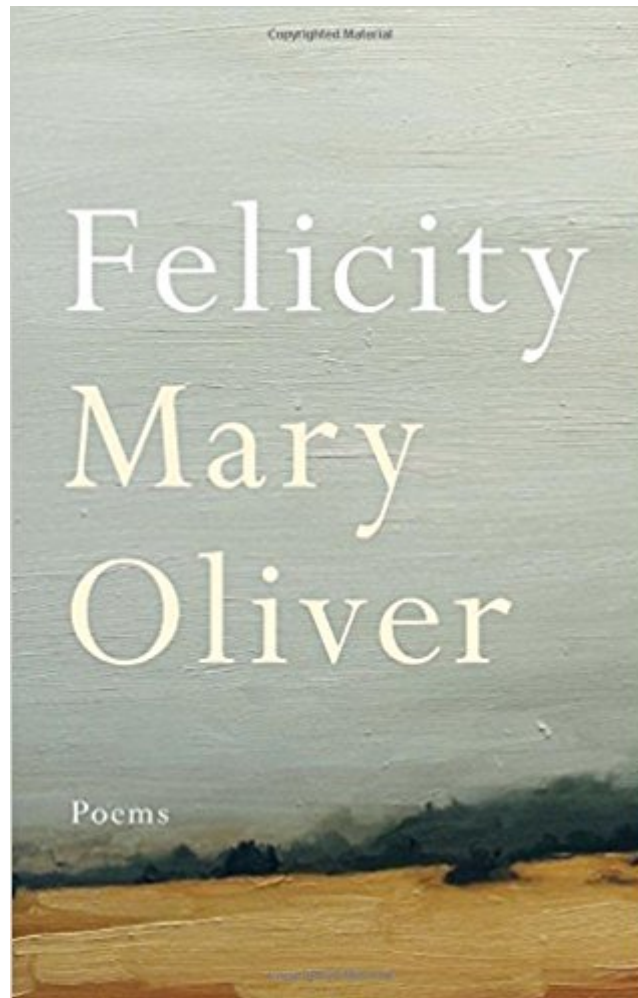


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Felicity: Poems



Synopsis

Mary Oliver, winner of the Pulitzer Prize, celebrates love in her new collection of poems. I have any secret stash of poems, anywhere, it might be about love, not anger, • Mary Oliver once said in an interview. Finally, in her stunning new collection, *Felicity*, we can immerse ourselves in Oliver's love poems. Here, great happiness abounds. Our most delicate chronicler of physical landscape, Oliver has described her work as loving the world. With *Felicity* she examines what it means to love another person. She opens our eyes again to the territory within our own hearts; to the wild and to the quiet. In these poems, she describes "with joy" the strangeness and wonder of human connection. As in *Blue Horses*, *Dog Songs*, and *A Thousand Mornings*, with *Felicity* Oliver honors love, life, and beauty.

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Customer Reviews

If you ever wondered how Mary Oliver perceives poems, she tells you in this book on *Felicity* fittingly in a poem: That pretty little beast, a poem, has a mind of its own. Sometimes I want it to crave apples but it wants red meat. Sometimes I want to walk peacefully on the shore and it wants to take off all its clothes and dive in. Sometimes I want to use small words and make them important and it starts shouting the dictionary, the opportunities. Sometimes I want to sum up and give thanks, putting things in order and it starts dancing around the room on its four furry legs, laughing and calling me outrageous. But sometimes, when I'm thinking about you, and no doubt smiling, it sits down quietly, one paw under its chin, and just listens. This is one of my favorite poems in this winsome collection. It gives you a spirit of the book ~ lots of felicity and charm.

Yes, the book is short. But then, Mary Oliver's work always leaves me wishing there was just one more poem. Yes, the poems themselves are brief. But then, is not that the way of love? Brief moments, snatches of time we etch into our hearts with permanent ink. Only later do we realize that the ink may have been permanent but the pages wear thin and disappear. We are left with savored fragments, like the simplicity of the "gesture of your hand reaching for me." Yes, I was surprised when I realized I had reached the end. But as her poems remind us, "Things take the time they take. Don't worry." "It's mostly attitude. I'm certain I'll see something." Their brevity allows our hearts to "remember, remember." And so five stars and a bow, "All I know is that 'thank you' [Mary Oliver] should appear somewhere. So, just in case I can't find the perfect place- 'Thank you, thank you.'"

It is not an over exaggeration to say ...I adore Mary Oliver. I was fortunate enough to hear her read here in Seattle some years ago and I fell in love with her poetry right on the spot and in a way her. Reading her work is like taking a walk with a friend through the woods or having a conversation about "Maybe" for hours. I will read every book she ever writes, we have journeyed together over the years and we both have changed and I have seen her changing in her writing...she has not noticed mine at all...of course I have never had the chance to tell her, and what importance would it be to her? It will be just a secret between me and the rest of the reviewers.

Once, a friend was sharing with me some of her favorite poets. She said, "Well, first of all, Mary Oliver. Of course." Yes, of course, I replied, too ashamed to admit my ignorance of a poet with whom I obviously should have been well-acquainted. Immediately after that conversation I began to read everything I could find by the incredible Mary Oliver, and I'm thrilled that I did. This new collection of love poems and meditations on happiness is simply perfection. Her eye for the natural world is as sharp as ever, but her verses on love and the experience of emotions like joy and happiness are what truly stir the heart in this volume. The final line in the book is sure to resonate with each reader of this precious work: "It must surely, then, be very happy down there in your heart. 'Yes,' I said. 'It is.'"

Oliver does not dive into nature like usual, but instead writes love poems here. Her style is so different, I would barely know it if I didn't know her. They are short, sometimes cryptic, but generally always include her way of inserting universal truth into the smallest observations. At this point, I wouldn't rank this in the lower third of her books for deciding which ones to re-read. But there may

be something here IÃ¢ÂÂm not seeing just yet so consider my rating provisional. I do love the way each poem is like a moment of tenderness seen through a sheer curtain that obscures everything but the intent of the people on the other side. Ã¢ÂÂI donÃ¢ÂÂt want to lose a single thread/ from the intricate brocade of this happiness./ I want to remember everything./ Which is why IÃ¢ÂÂm lying awake, sleepy/ but not sleepy enough to give it up./ Just now, a moment from years ago:/ the early morning light, the deft, sweet/ gesture of your hand/ reaching for me.Ã¢ÂÂ

• Grade: B

Essential beauty breaths through this memorable collection of Mary Oliver's poetry. I just loved it. My dearest friend died in October and this was a great support to me in my grief. The poem in memory to Tom Shaw encapsulates some of my deepest feelings and then, to share in the love Mary feels in her life helps me celebrate the love that was (and is in some ineffable way) between my friend and me. Thank you, Mary, ever putting what is beyond words into some form that gives space beyond language. What a gift you share with souls such as I am.

Mary Oliver does it again--absolutely beautiful and terrific. In other words, everything I expected when I put it on my wishlist!

All of Mary's books are incredible and inspiring, and her new poetry collection is no different. If you're already a fan of Mary's or new to her work, pick this one up!

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