



Felicity

Mary Oliver

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Mary Oliver, winner of the Pulitzer Prize, celebrates love in her new collection of poems

“If 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.

Felicity Details

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Author : Mary Oliver

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From Reader Review Felicity for online ebook

Tiffany Reisz says

Read at 3am this morning when I couldn't sleep. I'm so glad I had these poems to keep me and Honeytoast, my sad kitty, company in that quiet hour.

STORAGE

by Mary Oliver

When I moved from one house to another
there were many things I had no room
for. What does one do? I rented a storage
space. And filled it. Years passed.
Occasionally I went there and looked in,
but nothing happened, not a single
twinge of the heart.

As I grew older the things I cared
about grew fewer, but were more
important. So one day I undid the lock
and called the trash man. He took
everything.

I felt like the donkey when
his burden is finally lifted. Things!
Burn them, burn them! Make a beautiful
fire! More room in your heart for love,
for the trees! For the birds who own
nothing—the reason they can fly.

Kathleen says

The word “felicity” has multiple meanings, and here Mary Oliver certainly displays both “intense happiness” and plenty of “apt expressions.”

80 years old when this was published, these poems reflect a lightness, as if she's shedding previously held beliefs, distilling ideas down to their essence, laughing a bit at life, unafraid.

Most in this collection have that quiet intensity that I expected from Oliver. A few didn't touch me, but the ones that did left a lasting impression. Here are just two lines from one of my favorites, “Leaves and Blossoms along the Way.”

*Try to find the right place for yourself.
If you can't find it, at least dream of it.*

Jeannie says

I really enjoy Mary Oliver's poetry. She writes a lot about nature and animals. This book has poems about love. They are beautiful.

I Don't Want to Lose

I don't want to lose a single thread
from the intricate brocade of this happiness.
I want to remember everything.
Which is why I'm lying awake, sleepy
but not sleepy enough to give it up.
Just now, a moment from a year ago:
the early morning light, the deft, sweet
gesture of your hand
reaching for me.

Pamela says

"Beauty can both shout and whisper, and still/ it explains nothing."

I am a fan of Mary Oliver and was thrilled to receive this book from Goodreads as a first-reads giveaway. So many of Oliver's poems lay down a moment and then end with an unexpected line that works like a perfect meditation, which is why I love her work.

This collection is focused around God, nature, and love split into three parts entitled The Journey, Love, and Felicity. The Journey is written with Oliver's pastoral tradition of being in the outdoors. Many of these poems contain questions, exclamations, and there is some occasional preachiness--an experienced life telling the reader to let go, lighten up, trust without worry, pay attention to nature, and other truisms. When the poems are in the moment, when they cut through with precision and pause, the poems are lovely. But some poems felt too easy and ambiguous, leaving me with a sense of dissatisfaction that I am not accustomed to when reading Oliver's work.

I enjoyed the Love section, which is more precisely a sharing of gratitude for love between the self and another. Here, the poems felt more personal. And happy in a kind of shared-private-moment way.

My favorite poems in this collection were "Roses," "Leaves and Blossoms Along the Way," "I Know Someone," "What a This is Not," and "The Pond," I was disappointed by the unfinished or lacking quality of "Meadowlark," "The Wildest Storm," "Cobb Creek," "Humility," and "This and That."

Martha says

I so enjoyed this "fix" of Mary Oliver's poetry. It is spare but never sparse, and full of awe. This explores love. As I read my heart rate slowed and a great, thinking calm came over me.

Ammara Abid says

Humility

Poems arrive ready to begin.

Poets are only the transportation.

For Tom Shaw S.S.J.E. (1945–2014)

Where has this cold come from?

“It comes from the death of your friend.”

Will I always, from now on, be this cold?

“No, it will diminish. But always

it will be with you.”

What is the reason for it?

*“Wasn’t your friendship always as beautiful
as a flame?”*

Cathrine says

Oh reach into the night sky

and hand me 5 stars

so I can give you a 10 star review!

?Misericordia? ~ The Serendipity Aegis ~ ?????? ✨❤️ says

While a number of verses were questionably poetic, some gems are in here as well:

Q:

Things take the time they take. Don’t

worry (c)

Q:

Some words will never leave God’s mouth,

no matter how hard you listen. (c)

Q:

Do the trees speak back to the wind

when the wind offers some invitational comment? (c)

Q:

All important ideas must include the trees,

the mountains, and the rivers. (c)

Q:

The point is, you’re you, and that’s for keeps. (c)

Q:

Love is the one thing the heart craves

and love is the one thing

you can’t steal. (c)

Q:

“Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing there is a field. I’ll meet you there.” RUMI

Q:

When one is alone and lonely, the body
gladly lingers in the wind or the rain,
or splashes into the cold river, or
pushes through the ice-crusting snow.

Anything that touches.(c)

Jenny (Reading Envy) says

This isn't where I would start with Mary Oliver, and it pains me to give this collection only 3 stars. But they are a bit thin on connection and insight compared to her normal works.

Here is my favorite:

Moments

There are moments that cry out to be fulfilled.
Like, telling someone you love them.
Or giving your money away, all of it.

Your heart is beating, isn't it?
You're not in chains, are you?

There is nothing more pathetic than caution
when headlong might save a life,
even, possibly, your own.

David says

This is the fourth collection of Mary Oliver poems I've read and I'm still completely in awe.

Diane Barnes says

I prefer her poems about nature, but still, these are just beautiful. A surprise find at the library when I went in to renew my card.

Rachel (Kalanadi) says

3.5 stars. The first section "The Journey" was wonderful. The second, mostly love poems, wasn't quite my thing. Still not sure what my taste in poetry really is, but I suspect love poems are not it.

Maria says

Things take the time they take. Don't
worry.
How many roads did St. Augustine follow
before he became St. Augustine?

That is how Mary Oliver starts *The Journey*, the first part of her latest book that goes by the name of *Felicity*. How brilliantly appropriate, wouldn't you say? Reading this first poem titled *Don't Worry* on the very first day of a new year. Makes you think about the urgency of the resolutions whispered before midnight...

Mary Oliver's voice *feels* familiar, as if you have been listening to it since the moment you took your very first breath. Inner peace in the middle of the turmoil that is life, that's how I would describe her voice. There's a wiseness to it... Not self-proclaimed, though. There's respect, to each her/his own pace. She sees with her heart, her hopes and fears, and she then lays these portraits gently on the page with the help of words.

Only if there are angels in your head will you ever, possibly, see one.

If I were you, I would buy this book and read a poem a day. I believe it might be one of the ingredients of the recipe to happiness. And if you don't find it in her voice, do not give up. One will come that will resonate with you.

And just like that, like a simple neighborhood event, a miracle is taking place.

I honestly believe *Felicity* is the reassuring hand as you take a leap of faith, as you dive in head first into the immense universe that is life. Even through the darkest moments, it will guide you.

Every day has something in it whose name is Forever.

James says

Mary Oliver's latest collection is a rumination on love. Unfortunately, it takes her away from the natural world, searching a bit more in the ephemeral. Her strongest work has always been about looking at little moments and finding deeper meaning there. Without that connection to the physical world, there is something just self-helpy and feel good without feeling substantial. There are, of course, some beautiful moments because she's a wonderful writer and poet, but this thin book (the poems are printed on every other page) is a disappointment.

Mahsa says

It seems you love this world very much.

“Yes,” I said. “This beautiful world.”
And you don’t mind the mind, that keeps you
busy all the time with its dark and bright wonderings?
“No, I’m quite used to it. Busy, busy,
all the time.”
And you don’t mind living with those questions,
I mean the hard ones, that no one can answer?
“Actually, they’re the most interesting.”
And you have a person in your life whose hand
you like to hold?
“Yes, I do.”
It must surely, then, be very happy down there
in your heart.
“Yes,” I said. “It is.”

Beautiful, touching...
