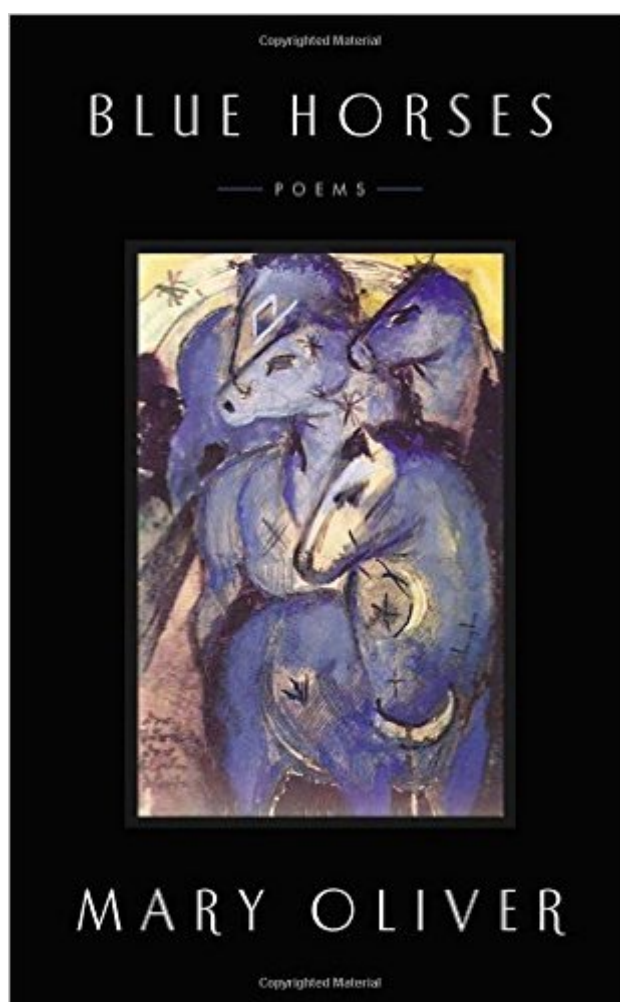


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Blue Horses: Poems



Synopsis

In this stunning collection of new poems, Mary Oliver returns to the imagery that has defined her lifeâ€™s work, describing with wonder both the everyday and the unaffected beauty of nature. Herons, sparrows, owls, and kingfishers flit across the page in meditations on love, artistry, and impermanence. Whether considering a birdâ€™s nest, the seeming patience of oak trees, or the artworks of Franz Marc, Oliver reminds us of the transformative power of attention and how much can be contained within the smallest moments. At its heart, *Blue Horses* asks what it means to truly belong to this world, to live in it attuned to all its changes. Humorous, gentle, and always honest, Oliver is a visionary of the natural world.

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Customer Reviews

Mary Oliver often comes to tea at my house. Or, her poetry does. It speaks to me as I sip each word like a fine blendâ€”spicy, rich, and telling. Usually thatâ€™s what happens. Not with Oliverâ€™s latest book, *Blue Horses*. I gulped it down like a puppy at a pond. Itâ€™s just what I needed, and will continue to need. These poems cry out for repeat visits, for underlining, for thinking about and going back again and again. She explains what I am looking for, what I am finding in her poetry, in the aptly named *What We Want*â€”it is *something inexplicable made plain*. Which she does, has done, will do for me. Iâ€™ll sip, and sometimes gulp, these poems along with her previous ones, and Iâ€™ll trust that she continues to take her long walks with her notebook and pen in her pocket so that soon Iâ€™ll have more to savor. Mary Oliver is always welcome here.

The only thing you really need to say about *Blue Horses: Poems* is that it's by Mary Oliver -- one of two or three truly great poets of our era. Her work is based in nature, but hardly limited to it; it's "simple," but hardly easy. In this book, begin at the beginning and then read through, or just browse -- you will be blessed by great poetry either way.

I am slowly reading this and savoring the experience, although like her other collections of poems, I will return to this again and again. Mary Oliver delivers... again. Each poem is tightly packed with so many layers of meaning, a compass of the human experiences of nature, love and loss. I wouldn't call this lyrical, yet I'd posit these poems on a sort of chronological and emotional event horizon that begins to reckon with not just the losses of in her life, but also an acknowledgement that one day her own pen will be stilled. I have found this collection to be moving, tender, keen and brilliant: all the things I expect from Mary Oliver.

This is a beautiful collection of poetry. It has been a while since I actually purchased a book of poetry, and this helped me realize I need to do it more often. The poems range from reflective to thought-provoking to incredibly moving (I was moved to tears with "I Woke"). I will treasure this collection.

I have loved, read and bought every book Mary ever wrote. Her writing has taken us through her young life to her mature years, through struggles and periods of peace and bliss and conversions and changes. She is a gift and I will never be able to thank her or the universe sufficiently. *Blue Horses* reflects a kind of 'becalmed' Mary Oliver. The phrases are there, but this is not a 'return' to her initial writing. Mary was once fiercely in love with life. Fiercely in love. The words are still there. The craftsmanship. But there is a roteness to it. With only small flashes of the old fire. Phrases that blew us all away; "I thought the earth remembered me" (sleeping in the forest) and "all you have to do is let the soft animal of your body love what it loves" (wild geese). And phrases like the seashells "so knocked about in the Sea's blue hands.." are gifts I can keep. I am grateful she is still writing. So I will say no more about *Blue Horses* than Mary seems distracted.

Once again Mary Oliver does not disappoint. I've read through this book twice in the few days I've had it. These are beautiful, thought provoking poems that beg the question, in Ms. Oliver's own words about a poem, any poem, "Do you feel it's hand in your hand?" You will.

It is impossible to choose a favorite in this amazing collection of Mary Oliver's. Any page I randomly turn to sings to me more beautifully than the previous or next. I received this book as a gift and my heart danced, to steal a line from one of these lovely gems, when I saw the detail from Franz Marc's "Turm der blauen Pferde" -- the dynamic stillness of the blue horses. I opened the book to that first random page (as I always do when I acquire a new book), and it was "After Reading Lucretius, I Go to the Pond." And of course, with all my family around, I had to read the first stanza: The slippery green frog that went to his death in the heron's pink throat was my small brother, I was elated, some of my relative were horrified, some of the kids giggled. And I was in love. How Mary Oliver does it, how she reduces her experiences and observations to utter simplicity and ground level, making them accessible and unattainable at the same time, is just a miracle to me. I feel so jaded sometimes, wanting to connect with the natural world, but caught up in this other world of work, schedules and exhaustion. But when I read Mary Oliver's poems, I am connected to my forgotten source -- nature. Taking a page from Mary's book is the best antidote for living in our breakneck, dog-eat-dog society.

Mary Oliver, Mary Oliver, Mary Oliver. I say her name like a prayer. Every poem takes me somewhere special and good. I don't know of any other living poet who observes nature and gives it back to the reader in the most joyous, original way. Thank you, Mary Oliver. Jean Colonomos

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