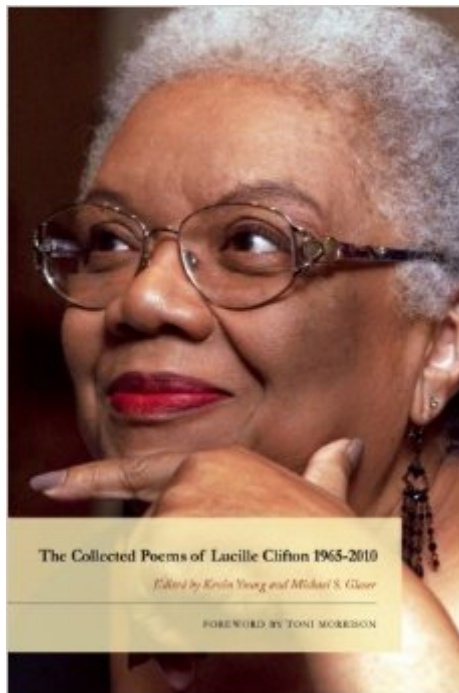


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# The Collected Poems Of Lucille Clifton 1965-2010 (American Poets Continuum)



## Synopsis

Winner of the 2013 Hurston/Wright Legacy Award for Poetry "The Collected Poems of Lucille Clifton 1965-2010 may be the most important book of poetry to appear in years."--Publishers Weekly "All poetry readers will want to own this book; almost everything is in it."--Publishers Weekly "If you only read one poetry book in 2012, The Collected Poems of Lucille Clifton ought to be it."#151;NPR "The 'Collected Clifton' is a gift, not just for her fans...but for all of us."--The Washington Post "The love readers feel for Lucille Clifton#151;both the woman and her poetry#151;is constant and deeply felt. The lines that surface most frequently in praise of her work and her person are moving declarations of racial pride, courage, steadfastness."#151;Toni Morrison, from the Foreword The Collected Poems of Lucille Clifton 1965#150;2010 combines all eleven of Lucille Clifton's published collections with more than fifty previously unpublished poems. The unpublished poems feature early poems from 1965#150;1969, a collection-in-progress titled the book of days (2008), and a poignant selection of final poems. An insightful foreword by Nobel Prize#150;winning author Toni Morrison and comprehensive afterword by noted poet Kevin Young frames Clifton's lifetime body of work, providing the definitive statement about this major America poet's career. On February 13, 2010, the poetry world lost one of its most distinguished members with the passing of Lucille Clifton. In the last year of her life, she was named the first African American woman to receive the \$100,000 Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize honoring a US poet whose "lifetime accomplishments warrant extraordinary recognition," and was posthumously awarded the Robert Frost Medal for lifetime achievement from the Poetry Society of America. "mother-tongue: to man-kind" (from the unpublished the book of days): all that I am asking is that you see me as something more than a common occurrence, more than a woman in her ordinary skin.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This marvelous volume collects all of Lucille Clifton's published books, and adds a generous helping of uncollected and previously unpublished ones. I've just spent a few days reading through all of them, being reminded of old friends and anthology pieces and discovering new favorites. Clifton's poems are accessible, compact, insightful, and meet any reasonable set of criteria for great and satisfying poetry. Sure, there is a section of those ouija board poems, but you can either pass over them or skim them. It's interesting that Clifton's ouija board had a poetic voice and set of concerns not unlike her own. The only things you need to add to complete your Clifton collection are the prose autobiography in *A Good Woman* and a selection of her children's books (if you like that form at all). Don't hesitate. Just buy the book and be comforted, challenged, sung to, filled with new insights, and delighted. We will not see her like again.

This book is a treasure. I have given copies to friends--and got one signed by Clifton's gorgeous daughter Lexie at the Baltimore Book Festival. That one is now beside my bed (though its poems, especially the ones from *THE TERRIBLE STORIES*, keep me awake. I gave one to a composer/performer I know who will doubtless get an opera or two out of its "lyrics." As one fortunate enough to have known Clifton, whom I shall now call Lucille, I am grateful not only for her amazing poems, and her generosity in giving readings, gratis, for good causes, but also for some funny, bizarre anecdotes she told me, several of which have morphed into poems and stories of my own.

I was introduced to Lucille Clifton's poetry by the marvelous teacher (and poet) Elizabeth Alexander, who lectured on Clifton at Poets House in Battery Park City. Alexander talked about Clifton's deceptive simplicity and her life, in which she suffered illness and many losses (her mother, at an early age, her husband, two of her six children), but which left her unbowed. I wanted to know more, and bought this book. Here's a poem that Clifton called, "Haiku." "over the mountains/and under the stars it is/one hell of a ride." Think about the meaning of "hell" and the meaning of "one hell of a ride." That's what Alexander was talking about

I knew of a couple of famous poems by Lucille Clifton but never felt pushed to explore her work further. Looking at this collection, I gave up even before trying by the enormity of the book. But after being lured into other collections, I have realised how an authors whole body of work speaks in a definite voice. With most poets, we need guides. Not with Lucille Clifton, atleast to enjoy it in first reading. Direct to reader poetry. The verse is so light (all simple worlds) that its hard to believe that one can write on weighty issues and still write on/from dreams, poetry for relatives and a letter and followups to Superman - not in the tone of 'Rescue me'. She taunts the forces be to topple her like those dolls that will never touch face with ground. Repetition used to good effect of gaining familiarty and belongingness. A title begins with ellipsis leading to God.

Wow. Simply wow. Ms. Clifton speaks for every woman. She writes for every man. She expresses what it is to be human. A most extraordinary poet, every poem is a gift. I bought a copy for me and another for a friend.

From simple, exquisitely penned words to full declarations, the poetry of Lucille Clifton remains eternal for me. There is one I may use as my epitaph. We are/were same-aged and both women, but not the same racially. It didn't matter to me. She speaks universally and gloriously.

This collection of virtually the life work of Ms. Clifton is beyond description. Her emotional range, from the mountain top to the depths of Hades, embraces the soul who is well acquainted with the roads of which she speaks.

I love this writer. Who else can write about menstruation as part of the history of one's life, at every age, and she converts a messy event into a comprehensive view of how diverse a woman's feelings about being a women are.

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