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# Teaching My Mother How To Give Birth (Mouthmark)



## Synopsis

What elevates 'teaching my mother how to give birth', what gives the poems their disturbing brilliance, is Warsan Shire's ability to give simple, beautiful eloquence to the veiled world where sensuality lives in the dominant narrative of Islam; reclaiming the more nuanced truths of earlier times - as in Tayeb Salih's work - and translating to the realm of lyric the work of the likes of Nawal El Saadawi. As Rumi said, "Love will find its way through all languages on its own"; in 'teaching my mother how to give birth', Warsan's debut pamphlet, we witness the unearthing of a poet who finds her way through all preconceptions to strike the heart directly. Warsan Shire is a Kenyan-born Somali poet and writer who is based in London. Born in 1988, she is an artist and activist who uses her work to document narratives of journey and trauma. Warsan has read her work internationally, including recent readings in South Africa, Italy and Germany, and her poetry has been translated into Italian, Spanish and Portuguese.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a great collection of poems from a talented young writer. I stumbled across one of her poems online and immediately sought out her chapbook here. Warsan Shire's writing is elegant, powerful, and makes me uncomfortable in the best ways. On rare occasions, I find art that fills me up. Sometimes, it is with rage, at others it is with guilt, or joy, or inspiration. This is one of those books that makes me feel. All of those things. And more. Read this book. Read these poems.

I read this far too quickly, I was eager. I suggest you, next reader, take it slowly, savour it. Her words come from a place of visceral, raw emotion. It's quiet at times, loud in others. It carries an uncompromising honesty. I couldn't keep it in my possession, I had to share it, I gave it to someone else who could be transported as I was.

I can't even begin to describe it. Essential life reading. This is something you must experience. Also do yourself the favor of searching online for her other works.

I gave my kids (adults) this book and the DVD Taylor Camp and said, "Now don't give me anymore grief about the way you were raised." This lady makes simple words and statements profound. My daughters love her work.

Warsan Shire's poems are poignant, beautiful, and resonant. She voices the pain of being imbricated in cultures, the rejection of the adoptive culture and the sense of displacement. She torques language and brings the reader to new understanding of the immigrant's experience. I'll be using this book in my Critical Thinking class.

One of the most prolific writers of our time. Warsan Shire writes with a refined approach and a wide array of emotive access. Her words are raw, harmonious and hauntingly beautiful. This book serves as the reality of not only many Somali women but women alike. With tribute to pain, trauma, memory, kinship, journey, Warsan makes room for readers to lose themselves in a provocative world. In her poems, storytelling takes place in an extraordinary and gripping way. No matter the length of this collection its pages will sustain you, its power will feed you, its words will charge you. Warsan is a timeless and enduring poet, a force this generation needs.

This is one of the best compositions I have read in a while. I am not going to lie. If it wasn't for Beyonce incorporating her pieces into her Visual album Lemonade on HBO this spring, Miss Warsan Shire might have gone unrecognized.

I don't recall how I was introduced to Warsan Shire but her poetry is one of those pleasant surprises that catches me entirely off-guard. Her way with words is powerful and loaded with subtext. There's a good balance of affection that mixes with fire.

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