



What I've Stolen, What I've Earned

Sherman Alexie

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Poetry. Native American Studies. "One of the major lyric voices of our time" (NY Times Book Review), winner of the National Book Award, Alexie publishes his first new collection of poetry and short prose in six years.

What I've Stolen, What I've Earned Details

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Author : Sherman Alexie

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Petter Nordal says

As always, Alexie shows so many sides of life that I think he's partially omniscient. His poems are insightful, beautiful and laugh-out-loud funny.

April says

Provocative. Lyrical. I spent lots of time in the Sonnets with and without section. With a saxophone , without salmon, with snow....The last one especially--I hope to share it in the classroom. There is much to try to reconcile within it. I'm sure I could keep retreading in this book for a long time, but I have to return it to the library. I will seek out other volumes of poetry by Alexie.

High Plains Library District says

I've been a big fan of Sherman Alexie for decades. I think he is brilliant. What I've Stolen, What I've Earned is no exception. It is the winner of the National Book Award, and, of course, Alexie has won numerous awards for his writing. He is phenomenal at what he does. That being said, if you are an Alexie fan, then you will truly enjoy this. It is an evolved version of his poetry, different in style, but still very strongly written in his beautiful voice. As usual, his poetry doesn't seem to have as much dry humor hidden between the lines as is often the case with his novels. They can be sad, annoying, revelatory, and non-committal, but they are all touching and thought provoking. If you read this collection, please pay special attention to "Blood In, Blood Out." It is a personal favorite of mine.

Rosa

Amy says

Loved it. This was my introduction to Alexie's poetry--indeed, to his writing--and I will definitely read more on the strength of this surprising, funny>, thought-provoking work. I kept it from the library far too long (because I kept wanting to sit back and ponder what I'd read. Some of it is awfully deep, while a goodly portion seems (at least with the first run-through) to be light and...not carefree but imbued with a certain joy.

I am really glad that I picked this up.

Gabbi Zurlo says

This collection of poems is a silent killer. It took me forever to read this and I thought I was trudging through it, but I have marked about 20 things to save. Alexie has won me over again. His verse has many references to his indigenous roots, of course, but they are so much more than that. They are human and honest and misleading and poignant. I want a copy of this for my shelves.

Rebecca Lartigue says

Really enjoyed this, especially his playing around with old forms. Honest and funny and surprising poems--confident, but not trying too hard.

Kristin says

I always enjoy reading Sherman Alexie. You'd think a young white woman from the East Coast would have absolutely nothing in common with a middle-aged Native American man from the West Coast, but somehow I always find at least a few bits and pieces that really speak to me. And even the pieces that don't are just so beautifully written that I appreciate the lyrical, almost musical quality of the words in my head.

This collection had a particularly interesting format, with 4 sections divided by Alexie's own version of poetic form - sonnets, odes, etc. It also has his typical self-awareness, but to a completely new level; in one poem, he takes a lengthy tangent to explain why nobody will memorize this particular poem because nobody memorizes free verse, so he promises to end with a line or two that summarizes his point - and he does.

Among Alexie's usual mix of sacred and profane, I particularly enjoyed "Ode to Coffee, As Imagined by Wikipedia." So... race, education, lovers, fathers, alcoholism, philosophy, and coffee. As usual, Alexie mixes all of these things (and more) up and makes them fit. Amazing stuff.

Joshua Gage says

Alexie once again shows his prowess as a poet in this collection. His range is wide, from prose poetry and experiments to traditional forms, and his imagery and tone are sharp as ever. Part of me wants him to branch out beyond his Indian/reservation life/etc. imagery and metaphors, but the other part of me demands that poets be the voice of the voiceless, and champions Alexie for continually bringing these voices to the reader's attention. A very solid book.

Jason says

Sherman Alexie continues to amaze, surprise, and delight me with his poetry, whether he is following a form, twisting a form, creating a form, or abandoning form altogether.

I won't make a list of favorite poems from this collection because it would pretty much be the table of contents. :)

Michael says

What a wonderful collection of poems. These poems are witty and hilarious and often caused me to laugh out loud and occasionally caused me to wince. They are unique. The author celebrates his Indian-ness, his maleness, his role as father and son and husband and neighbor and citizen. He did what poets do best, help us see things in the world that we may never have noticed. It's brilliant and beautiful. I'm very glad I read it.

Stephanie Gustafson says

I like that he's playing around with forms like sonnets and odes. I like the meta aspect of his writing, and that it focused a lot on fathers. It made me think of the end of *Smoke Signals* where Thomas recites "Do We Forgive Our Fathers" because a lot of content is about fathers. I love the idea of a feature film about Emily Dickinson and the tag line "Her Life Stood a Loaded Gun." I would see that flick!

Wynne Lee says

Alexie's spirit, mind, images & skill as writer make his latest collection of poems (in pretty much every form imaginable, from haiku to free verse) more than worth the time. He's honest, clear, relentless, funny... highly recommended.

Michael says

I read so little poetry that I'm hesitant to rate this. I did read it, and finished it, and enjoyed it. A bit too self-referential at times, a bit full of itself at others. Overall, though, left me with lots to think about, both at the micro level of language use and the macro level of Alexie's experiences. Glad I branched out.

Amy says

I've been sending people the link to "Sonnet Without Salmon" ever since it appeared in "Orion" magazine so I was surprised that was only my second favorite poem in this collection. My favorite one was the alphabet poem which deserves a place right up there with the poetic nonsense alphabets produced by Edward Lear, and I mean that as high praise indeed. Sherman Alexie is a genius.

Jayde Alexander says

I originally marked this book as currently reading, even though I have read it, because it's a book of poetry, and it's by Sherman Alexie, and that means I keep reading it over and over again. True to Alexie's other works, this book is a wonderful, amazing, beautiful, truth-telling mess - and that's a compliment. So clever. I wish I could write like Alexie.
