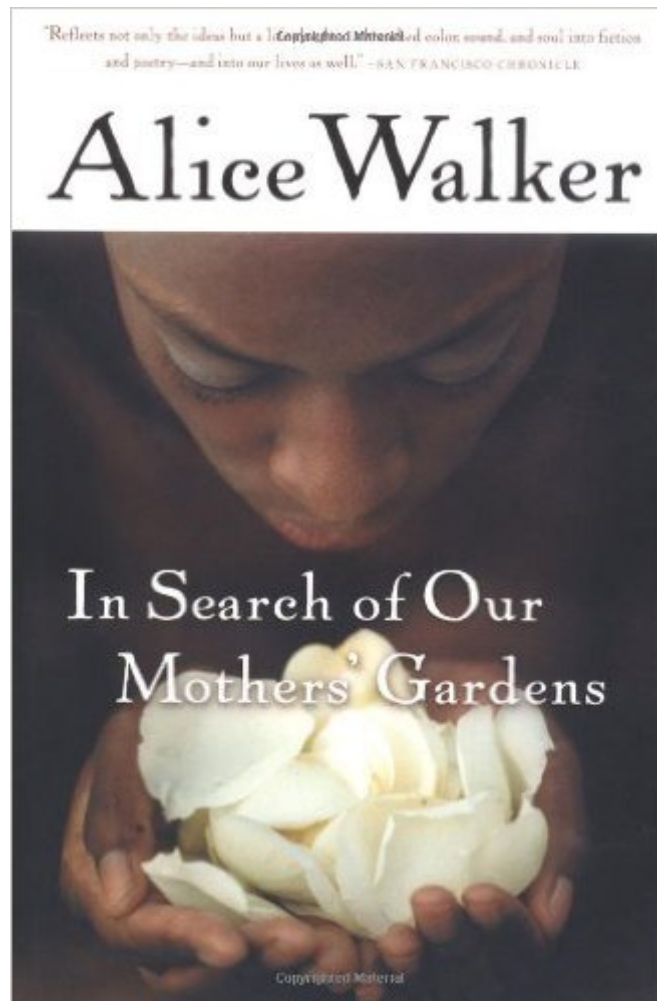


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In Search Of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose



Synopsis

In this, her first collection of nonfiction, Alice Walker speaks out as a black woman, writer, mother, and feminist in thirty-six pieces ranging from the personal to the political. Among the contents are essays about other writers, accounts of the civil rights movement of the 1960s and the anti-nuclear movement of the 1980s, and a vivid memoir of a scarring childhood injury and her daughter's healing words.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In her essay concerning post-Reconstruction African-American women, Alice Walker seeks to put a human face on what Americans may otherwise only remember as an unfortunate scar on our glorious history. She asks, "Who were the Saints? These crazy, loony, pitiful women?" And in answering herself, she replies in repetition, "our mothers and grandmothers." These are the human faces to which she has attributed all that is contemporary Black America. "Moving to music not yet written," Walker's image of the former female slave is one, not necessarily of a battered laborer, nor of a heifer being kept only because of her ability to breed valuable livestock, but rather as an artist ahead of her time. These women made beauty while amidst horrible conditions. These women were not merely ex-slaves, but they were "Poets, Novelists, Essayists, and Short-Story Writers" whose potential was never met, and dreams were never realized. For this reason, Walker attempts to embolden and even mobilize African-American women with the responsibility of realizing the potential of black creativity denied their ancestors. Walker asks, "Do you have a genius of a

great-great-grandmother who died under some ignorant and depraved white overseers lash?" What an amazing question to ask. How many geniuses and artists were slain by the horror of slavery? Americans spend a lot of time and energy thinking about the economic, political, and social restrictions slavery imposed on African Americans, but I have never even heard elusions to the loss of black creativity due to slavery. I too have given more thought to the socioeconomic inequality within black America than I've ever given to the stifling of their creative ability.

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