

BLACKBERRIES

BY MARGARET ATWOOD

NATIONAL
POETRY 
DAY 2020

See It Like a Poet

In the early morning an old woman
is picking blackberries in the shade.
It will be too hot later
but right now there's dew.

Some berries fall: those are for squirrels.
Some are unripe, reserved for bears.
Some go into the metal bowl.
Those are for you, so you may taste them
just for a moment.
That's good times: one little sweetness
after another, then quickly gone.

Once, this old woman
I'm conjuring up for you
would have been my grandmother.
Today it's me.
Years from now it might be you,
if you're quite lucky.

The hands reaching in
among the leaves and spines
were once my mother's.
I've passed them on.
Decades ahead, you'll study your own
temporary hands, and you'll remember.
Don't cry, this is what happens.

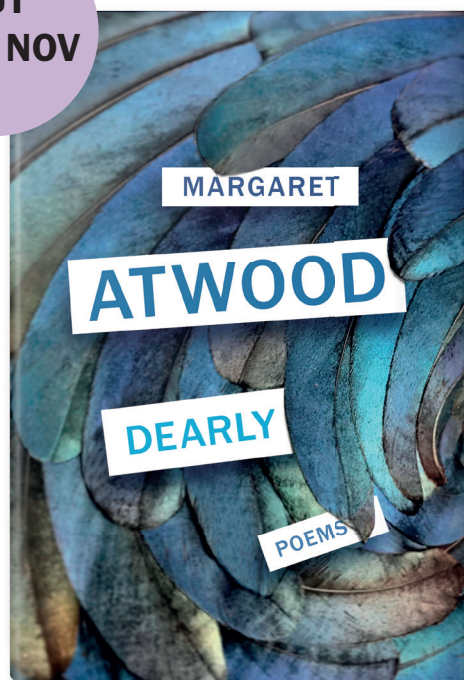
Look! The steel bowl
is almost full. Enough for all of us

The blackberries gleam like glass,
like the glass ornaments
we hang on trees in December
to remind ourselves to be grateful for snow.

Some berries occur in sun,
but they are smaller.
It's as I always told you:
the best ones grow in shadow.

OUT
10TH NOV

'Blackberries' from **DEARLY**, the collection
of a lifetime from Margaret Atwood



Reserve your copy now at Waterstones

VINTAGE

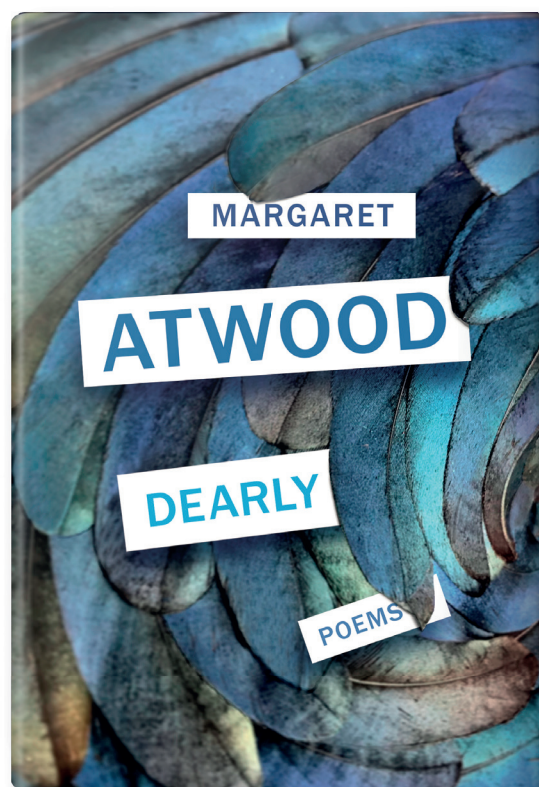
‘Poetry has always been central to my other forays into language. It opens doors for me into spaces that may later be found to contain stories. Poets do annoy other people, because they seem to spend a lot of time looking out the window, but that’s when the unexpected may enter’

MARGARET ATWOOD

National Poetry Day is an annual UK-wide celebration encouraging people everywhere to enjoy, discover and share poetry, this year it takes place on **1st October 2020** and the theme is **Vision**.

We would love you to read and respond to Margaret Atwood’s poem ‘Blackberries’ in any way that you choose – it could be another poem, a drawing or painting, some music or a dramatic reading.

Share your interpretation on Twitter or Instagram by **10th October** including **#AtwoodNPD** to be in with a chance of winning one of five hardback copies of Margaret Atwood’s poetry collection *Dearly**.



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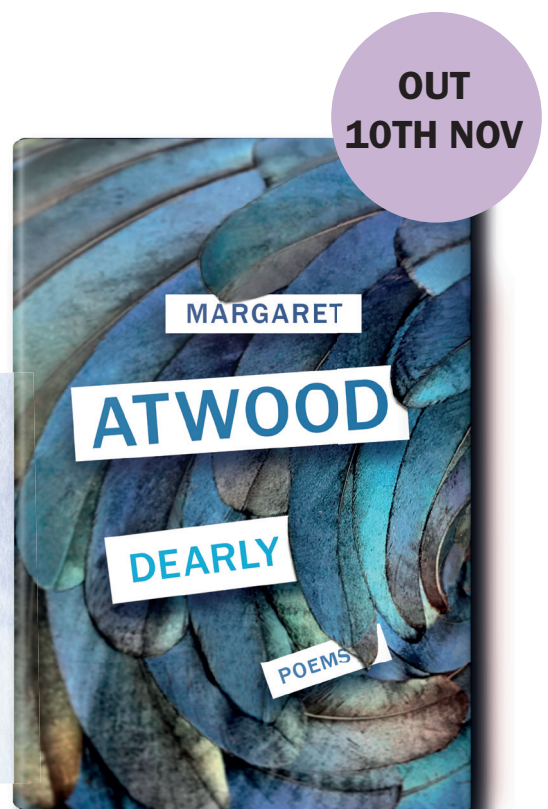
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NATIONAL POETRY DAY 2020



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#ATWOODNPD

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This is my work and if other people share it, they need to credit me as the author.

Inspired by 'Blackberries' from *DEARLY*, the poetry collection
of a lifetime from Margaret Atwood