

## The sun and her flowers analysis

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The Sun and Its Flowers is the second book of poetry from superstar and Instagram sensation Rupi Kaur, a Canadian poet, writer, illustrator, and performer who has changed the contemporary landscape of poetry since her debut, the New York Times bestseller in 2014. And like its predecessor, Kaura's newest collection also explores great themes including loss and love and identity in a way that is cordial, relatable, and beautifully raw. Poems range in length from one line to several pages, but most of them are in what has become Kaura's signature style: short and uncomplicated lines that seem to say much more in total than the total number of their parts. Five sections of the book correspond to a poem that compares the process of personal growth with the life cycle of a flower. The poem is based on a lesson Kaur credits her mother. This is a recipe life said my mother, as she held me in her arms as I wept think of those flowers that you wind up in the garden each year they will teach you that people too much withering the order of flowering As these sections (withering, falling, root, growth, and blooming) Kaur takes the reader together on what can be interpreted as an individual path of loss and renewal, but because of the accessibility of its history, ultimately is evidence of the universal resilience of the human heart. It is, in many ways, a unique echo of every beautiful story of death and resurrection ever told. In withering, Kaur laments the loss of love, writing shamelessly from her most vulnerable places. I think my body knew you weren't going to stay,' she admits. In the second section, Drop, her focus moves from the external loss of love to what is missing inwards: Many times / we get angry with other people / for what we have not done for ourselves, she writes, and it is a journey that further extends to her past, her family, and her cultural identity in the third section. Kaur, who was born in India and emigrated with her parents to Canada when she was four, explores the rooting of her own roots and the sacrifices her parents have made for her family in the movement. She writes: My mother sacrificed her dreams / so I could dream. And she's having a dream. While Kaur is able to speak and often stun from her scars in a way that can make the average person blush, she has a way of doing so where she never comes through as weak. On the contrary, her quiet power shines even through her dark words as she writes, there is a god in you you can feel her dancing, foreshadowing the growth she makes through the last two sections of the anthology, rising and blooming. In fact on the blooming, Kaur is unapologetically in love with herself and her life, and is already thinking ahead to the next cycle of life that will happen when she gives birth to her own children, perhaps best illustrated in this poem and accompanying his drawing, which Kaur signs as an ode to Raymond Douillet's short tour and farewell: when my Living in my belly will talk to her as she has already changed the world she will come out of me on the red carpet equipped with the knowledge that she is capable of saying she sets her mind to this message that will resonate with everyone who has read through the sun and her flowers, because I suspect Kaur is not only talking about her future daughter, but the rebirth she encourages in each of her readers baring her own. Kaur herself is no stranger to verification. Her style of poetry and perhaps even more so, her preferred medium of publishing it-Instagram-has earned her a fair amount of literary criticism, even as she amassed a huge following. Her letter is sometimes chided for being too Tumblr-esque, ding on the very thing that makes her work as popular as it has become: its simplicity. By nodding to his native language (Punjabi), Kaur avoids capitalizing and using any punctuation other than period. Paired with her ability to crash into the heart of a message in a few words, her style lends itself to poems that mimic the writing of her accompanying drawings: short and simple lines, little decorations, leaving much to be filled by the reader. If a picture is worth a thousand words, Kaur is worth much less, but I think it's by design. After all, what is poetry, if not a mechanism that allows the reader to see in his heart? Kaur easy to read poems and simple illustrations leave room for his fans to pass on their own stories on the pages and maybe eventually join the Kaura girl on the red carpet, arms outstretched in their personal growth. Photo: Nabil Shash Rupi Kaur - a young woman of remarkable talent and artistry; her second collection of poems, The Sun and Her Flowers, follows the sensational success of her debut, Milk and Honey. Sun and its flowers explores the healthy and unhealthy relationship between lovers and friends, between parents and children, the roots that keep us grounded and the gifts of love we share with each other. Could you say a few words about the inspiration for the sun and its flowers? The sun and its flowers were my most difficult creative work. The inspiration for the collection came mainly from conversations with people, whether strangers I met on my travels, or my best friends and family. A lot of inspiration came from being away from those closest to me. There were US elections - I wanted to think about my parents and would be wondering if I was doing enough for them. This wine, pain and reflection inspired the sun and its flowers. Is it accurate to say that milk and honey had a much greater deal with individual pain, while the sun and its flowers are wider in their reach? Yes. Milk and honey almost wrote himself. It was a byproduct of me just writing because I love doing it so much. With the sun and its flowers, I researched topics that I never thought I would address. I was a little timid to write about my parents and topics like immigration infanticide. The sun and its flowers are not an extension of milk and honey. It should be his own body of work and stand on his own two feet. How did the name of the sun and its flowers come about? I am fascinated by sunflowers and their powerful connection to the sun - how they rise and fall every morning and evening. I like to think that we have our own sun and flowers of different situations, experiences or people we encounter in our lives. You are generous with fans of your work, posting poems from the sun and its flowers on social networks before the book is published. Tell us about your motivation to do so. I started my career by sharing my letter on a free platform. Accessibility is very important to me. I want my job to reach all my readers or not, they can afford my books. Even the decision to publish in paperback to hardcover was all about affordability. I come from a family where, growing up, the only books we bought were from thrifty shops. It's only recently that I've allowed myself to buy a new, full-price book. Also, I wanted to prepare the reader to let them know that my themes have evolved because I don't want to pick up the sun and its flowers and say: Oh no, it's nothing but milk and honey. There is some chatter out there about the sun and its flowers novel. Is there any truth to this? I've written about 10 chapters worth of scenes for my novel, but I still have to figure out the plot. Novels are a completely different genre, and I want to work on improving my skills. To that end, do you want you to be able to slow things down, expecting that you will continue to produce your art on demand? Yes! We live in an era where things are moving so fast. There is this fear running that if you don't put out something, you will be forgotten. And to combat this, I have repeatedly said to myself: it's not content, it's art. So it doesn't matter if I don't publish for a while. I want to give myself space and tools to be an artist, to be creative. What are some of your favorite book types? Currently, I love and revise children's books - Dr. Seuss and Shel Silverstein. It's not even children's books for me. Adults need them, perhaps even more than children! I decided to re-read the Harry Potter series for the 100th time. Harry Potter is a place of consolation for me. I started the series in fourth grade and I was constantly rereading them just to feel at home. I travel with a copy of Harry Potter and the Poterph Prince in my backpack if I'm worried about traveling or meeting someone on a certain day. What advice would you give to this young (or not very young) person who wants to express himself through his art? A few rare people are born with talent. But most people, like me, are not. Practice is everything. Whatever successful artist you're looking up to, they don't just get there by accident. It takes years and years of dedication and discipline. You have to put in it's really the only way. --Shahina Piyarali Page 2 photo: Alice Feeney Alice Feeney is a journalist and writer who has worked for the BBC as a reporter, editor and producer. After living in London and in Sydney, Australia, she now resides in rural Surrey. Sometimes I lie to her debut novel. Talk to us through your transition from a BBC reporter to a published novelist. As a child I sat in the back of my parents' shop scribbling mini-books on folded sheets of paper. I worked for the BBC for 16 years and I loved my job, but my secret dream has always been an author. It was such a secret that most of the people I worked with had no idea that I was busy writing Sometimes I lie on the train to work and during my lunch breaks. The press release about my book case was a big surprise to many people! I work in my garden shed now with my cownter, a giant black Labrador who is afraid of feathers. When did you decide to start writing novels? I started my first novel of the year I turned 30 and it feels like I've been scribbling in my spare time ever since. I tried and failed a few times. I have a fair share of rejection letters, but every time I just picked myself up and tried again. That's what you have to do. I think you should follow your dreams, no matter how scared you are. Your dreams always know the way. Have you attended Faber's Academy letter course before or after this decision? I already had an idea sometimes I lie and wanted to write the best book I could and give myself - and a novel - the best chance. In many ways, it felt like my last chance, so I worked even harder than before and it meant everything to me. I applied for a seat on the course and got myself a 0% credit card to pay for it. I completed Sometimes I Lie just before I finished and was approached by 15 literary agents, so all that hard work is worth it! How was it to hear that it was sold at auction? It was amazing and I will never forget this moment! I was at work when I got a call sitting next to one of the BBC's main news anchors (Huw Edwards) and I had to act like everything was normal when my whole life just changed! I was very lucky to have the best agent in the known universe (Johnny Geller) and I was completely overwhelmed and very flattered by the response to my book. At what point did you quit your BBC job? I was 21 years old when I started working in the newsroom, and my colleagues were like a surrogate family, though a little dysfunctional, so dismissal was not an easy decision. I talked about leaving with my agent after a deal with the UK, and a few days later, when the book was put up for auction in the US and Germany, I decided to make the leap. What made you want to write crime fiction? I think the best advice I've ever been given as a writer is to write a book you want to read. I am lots of books, all genres, but my favorites tend to be pretty dark and meandering. I don't think psychological thrillers are new; I'd say Agatha Agatha wrote one or two, and my favorite author is Gillian Flynn. As a child, I was obsessed with Stephen King novels, and it could also affect the way I write now. What was your biggest surprise since publication? When did you feel like you were going to do it? I don't really feel like I've done it yet. I'm not sure I'll ever feel that way. For me, it's just about trying to write the best books I can for someone who is loving enough to read them. Writers are nothing without readers and I am so grateful to everyone. I live in a very old Victorian house full of books and it is constantly in need of renovation, but I love every brick and it is the only house that has ever felt at home. I always hated kitchen tiles, but never seemed to be able to afford to do anything about them. Other things like the new roof, when the rain started to flow, were more important. So my big treat myself when I got the publishing was a new kitchen tile! I love cooking, and every time I see my new tiles, I remember that my stories paid for them and it makes me very happy. Legendary Entertainment bought tv rights sometimes I lie. Without spoiling anything, what elements will you insist on staying unchanged in the film adaptation? Legendary has made some of my favorite movies, including Beginning, Interstellar and The Dark Knight. I was out of delight when I found out that they wanted to buy the rights to sometimes I lie. I'm a TV consultant and it's great to participate, but I trust the legendary team to do what they do best. I can't say too much about it at the moment, but I'm really excited about everything they've planned and I can't wait to see Amber come alive on screen. Is your next book, Sometimes I Kill, linked in any way to a lie or is it autonomous? Sometimes I Kill is a whole new story. I just finished reading the latest project and I'm super excited about it. It's dark and meandering, there are parts that are genuinely surprised, shocked and frightened by me, and I hope people will enjoy reading it as much as I loved writing it. Amber, the main character of the film Sometimes I Lie, begins the book with three sayings about herself. Using the same pattern, what would your confessions be like? My name is Alice Feeney. There are three things you should know about me: Page 3 3

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