

# Poetry analysis essay – human nature by alice anderson

[Profession](#), [Poet](#)



When the news dawned on me and my classmates that such an essay was expected from us so shortly after the midterm, I was kind of frustrated, but I'm glad to have risen to the challenge. For my book, I looked through many known authors like Maya Angelo and many more unknown poets who kept most of their poems under the titles of "Untitled". I went for the little black book, because usually the best things are in little black books. This one was right on the money.

A book of poems titled Human Nature by a female poet named Alice Anderson. Rape, lust, consensual sex, and family incest are the subjects pretty much all the poems touched in this book. It is a sick and twisted, yet delicious web of words woven into intricate poems. Most of the poems do not follow many rules or pattern or rhyme scheme, but this is not a flaw but a support. If the poem is hindered from the start by having to rhyme, most of the story can be lost from just trying to purposely make things rhyme.

Anderson must have knew this from the beginning and told the stories of her fractured and maimed past as straight forward as possible without going off into a tangent and making it a full blown series of short stories. The very first poem in the book called, The Split, can be treated as the 'weed whacker' poem. I think Anderson made sure this poem came first since it spreads everything out on a platter right before the reader. It focuses in on a young woman getting kissed by her lover after getting out of the shower and then – Zip! – the poem changes its already slightly confusing train tracks.

The focus is now about how a little girl falls and scrapes her knee, assuming is it Anderson herself, and being tended to by her father. The scene seems to

revert back to the young couple about to make love. But the narrator makes a jump and then the poem goes as such. “ You fall. / Your knees are skinned and full of rocks but you’re almost / you again, panties wrapped around an ankle, undershirt pushed up. / You hear your breathing and his breathing. You’re hot. / Your eyes are open again, staring at something they / don’t even see.

And when finally it happens you realize / that it isn’t your father filling you this time... ” Immediately as a reader, you get the gut instinct to shut the book and put it back on the shelf. Or, for the more daring and unknowing dark seekers, want to keep reading the twisted tales told in poetry form. I was one of the curious few who didn’t snub off the book just because I did not agree with the subjects of the poetry. It takes an open mind to appreciate poetry that reveals so much, even if it is a tragic and frowned upon genre.

All of the poem patterns really do not follow any special lines or eye pleasing patterns. Not all, but a few did out of the whole collection of the satiric poems. One called Answers, the poem takes on a broken feel. “... best friend by best friend, me at the end by the front door. Suzy’s mother finally went to bed and then the real games began. Spin the Bottle – girls kissing girls, softly. And Truth or Dare – everyone taking the dare... ” This particular poem had a slightly less dark vibe to it since Anderson wrote it about her own thoughts at a fun occasion.

Also it is one of the only poems where she makes clear she has friends who do not know about her ordeals. About how when she was a young preteen at a slumber party. At this particular slumber fest, she recalls the girls talking about how if they were to lose 'it', would they still wear white to their wedding. 'It' being their virginity and thus, their purity. At such a young age, Anderson's virginity was taken from her and keeping it to herself. But the question makes her think about if she would indeed wear the untainted color of white at her wedding even she has already been dirtied.

Later in the book of poems, Anderson meets the love of her life, the lover we got a rare glimpse of in the first poem, and describes them making love. Even though he is not her father, her mind cannot stop flashing back to how her father would molest her sexually. It revolves around her purity again in the poem Blue-Blackout when the line "... he was my first. We both knew it. We believed it. My whole life depended on it..." comes up. She clings to the idea that she is a virgin for her lover's sake. She does not want him to be tainted like she has been.

In my opinion, the most shocking fact I came into grips with was that not only Anderson and her father knew of the incest, but so did the mother and the elder brother. It made me wonder what type of brainwash or control did he have over them to keep them all quiet and ignorant. Then in the poem The Good Christian. The father used religion and twisted it up; tricking his daughter into thinking what he was doing was just. "And so in church you were afraid. You knew.

That closing your eyes made no prayer come true. That all sins of sinner were forgiven. Yet in this poem, she is looking back on her father's words and recalling when she was in church at how confused she was. No matter how her father was, she was brainwashed into believing he'd be forgiven. Towards the end of the book, as a reader, you may feel emotionless or full of swelled up emotions, making what to burst into tears. You are either filled with sadness or completely ripped away of how you should feel. Just like Anderson as a child, you feel as if you yourself have been raped, but only mentally; which will make you wonder if physical or mental rape is worse than the other.