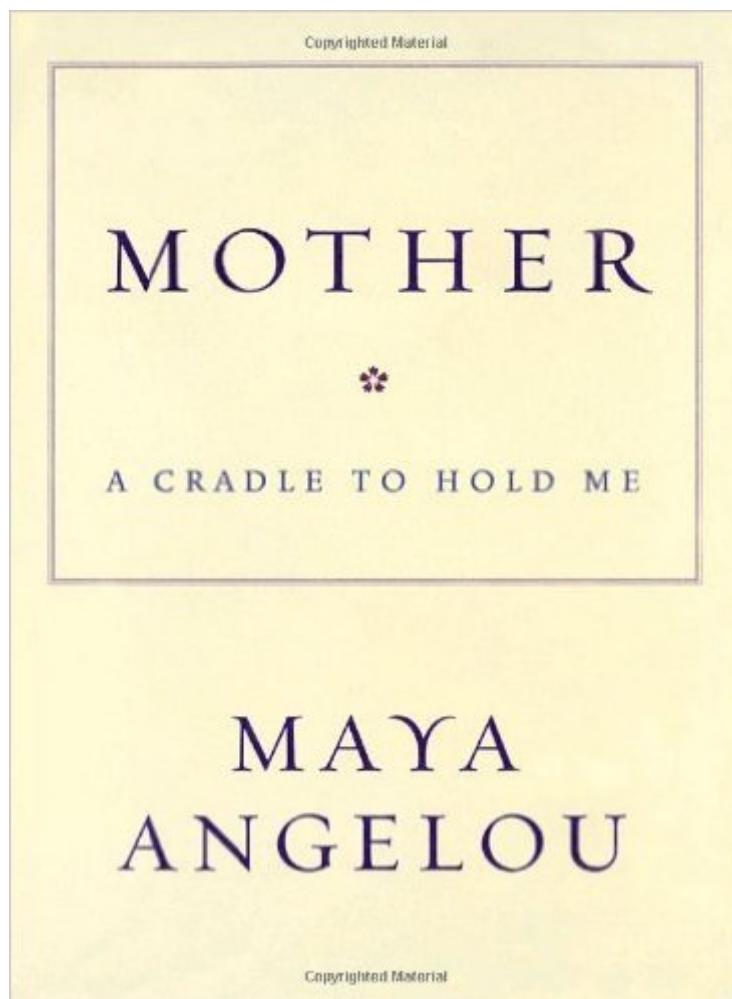


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# Mother: A Cradle To Hold Me



## **Synopsis**

Poet, writer, performer, teacher, and director Maya Angelou was raised in Stamps, Arkansas, and then moved to San Francisco. In addition to her bestselling autobiographies, beginning with *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, she has also written a cookbook, *Hallelujah! The Welcome Table*; five poetry collections, including *I Shall Not Be Moved* and *Shaker, Why Don't You Sing?*; and the celebrated poems "On the Pulse of Morning," which she read at the inauguration of President William Jefferson Clinton, and "Amazing Peace," which she read at the lighting of the National Christmas Tree in Washington, D.C., in December 2005.

## **Book Information**

Hardcover: 32 pages

Publisher: Random House (April 11, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1400066018

ISBN-13: 978-1400066018

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.4 x 6.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

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## **Customer Reviews**

I have never written a review, I'm the person who always reads but never writes. I saw that this book didn't have 5 stars average so I had to review it. Becoming a mother is the most miraculous and blessed thing that has ever happened to me - most Mothers will agree. This book pulled at my heart as it captured that love between me and my Son so perfectly. I read this book and cry every time. I will buy this book for each of my friends as they have their first children. Never has a book been so meaningful to me.

If you have followed Dr. Maya Angelou in all the years that I have followed her work since younghood, you may not get what is happening here. Maya has claimed her rights of passage from youth to a seasoned mature adult who has stood the test of time, survived all obstacles and is still standing. A book any longer than 10 pages would not resemble the message of this great poet of

our time. Perhaps, it is a silent protest we know nothing about and never will. Dr. Maya Angelou is 78 years old. If she writes another full book it will take all she can give. She is well to all who see her, but to friends and family, we see that gloss in her eye, the slowness of her stride these days, and will power to talk when in pain. We must treasure these moments and wish Dr. Maya the strength to keep going until she is one hundred. She was meant to span a century and is deserving of peace, plenty of rest and I hope everything her heart desires in life and even it is just to still be admired for her work as a poet. This is the MAYA we know and love. THIS WOMAN'S WORK! is meant to be written as her destiny has been planned. Can you imagine carpal tunnel syndrome, an aching leg from being one of the greatest dancers, all of those movies she's produced...people she's helped, speeches she's completed and places she's traveled, not to mention her struggle for the intellectual rise of Black people in this nation. She paved the way for so many and like Jesus who was admired and then cast and stoned, I am routing for Dr. Maya to not have to succumb to society's way of destroying the ambition of successful Black Americans. Dr. Maya Shall NOT be moved. Listen, be wise and learn from MOTHER. I see a message, but one has to stand very still and LISTEN!!!!!!

Motherhood is colorblind, but it's especially apt that the 78-year-old Maya Angelou sings praises for The Beleaguered Black Mother. Not only is the content delicious, but the unpaginated 10-page slender vanilla volume is elegantly designed. Rather than plow through a tome of childhood psychology, the reader gains four minutes of insights on mothering from birth through emancipation as an adult. Cliches are rescued by gems such as "nougats of glee" and "from my high perch of teenage wisdom." This is sentimentality at its best. How could it be otherwise, Dear Mother!

The book description is 32 pages, but I counted only 10 pages (printed single-sided) with one poem on each page so that makes ten poems. And this goes for \$9.95 not including shipping and taxes. Hmm....I like much of Maya Angelou's works, but I could barely read through all the poems, and consequently the entire book (which took all of 5 minutes). The poems were not particularly good, elegant, or insightful. Well, I'm just plain shocked that Random House and Maya decided that ten short poems constituted a book.

I checked out this book from our public library because I was intrigued by the notion of a tiny "book" the entire content of which is one, short poem by one of our country's most famous writers. In addition to her autobiographical works, Maya Angelou has published five volumes of poetry, and

has read her work ("On the Pulse of Morning") at the inauguration of President Bill Clinton. There is no foreword, preface, afterword, bibliography, or any explanatory notes to "Mother," just the brief poem itself. If you did not stop to ponder and meditate, you could read the poem in five minutes. But that would be a shame. Angelou's poem evokes the grace and power of our mothers, and our experience of them beginning as babies, then proceeding through childhood, teenage rebellion, and then adulthood. My mother died a year ago and Angelou's poetry renewed my gratitude and admiration for her.

"...I loved you even during the years  
When you knew nothing  
And I knew everything, I loved you  
still.  
Condescendingly of course,  
From my high perch  
Of teenage wisdom.  
I spoke sharply of you,  
often  
Because you were slow to understand.  
I grew older and  
Was stunned to find  
How much  
knowledge you had gleaned.  
And so quickly.  
Mother, I have learned enough now  
To know I have  
learned nearly nothing.  
On this day  
When mothers are being honored,  
Let me thank you  
That my  
selfishness, ignorance, and mockery  
Did not bring you to  
Discard me like a broken doll  
Which had lost  
its favor.  
I thank you that  
You still find something in me  
To cherish, to admire and to love.  
I thank you,  
Mother.  
I love you."

The above is an excerpt from the last two pages of this little book given to me as a Mothers' Day CARD "because every word fit" by my near 19-year old daughter a week before she returns from her first year away at college. In reading it, I realized that there were many reasons for the tears of joy rapidly escaping my eyes as I carefully read each word. That she still enjoyed the gifts I had introduced to her at an early age -poetry, strong females (Maya Angelou) and the written word; that she has realized at only 19 that not only am I not an idiot but that even though my life included more than just her, she was nonetheless the most important thing in my life and has an inkling of how cherished she has been. Best of all, the words that fit so well show that she loves me deeply as I always hoped she would once she reached "adulthood". Oh and Maya's poetry is simple, succinct and beautiful as always!

This book is truly beautiful. As a mother it warmed my heart to know that a strong women like Maya would write a book like this. "Perfect for Mother's Day"

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