Poem at Thirty-Nine

How I miss my father.  
I wish he had not been  
so tired  
when I was  
born.  
  
Writing deposit slips and checks  
I think of him.  
He taught me how.  
This is the form,   
he must have said:   
the way it is done.  
I learned to see  
bits of paper  
as a way  
to escape  
the life he knew  
and even in high school  
had a savings  
account.  
  
He taught me  
that telling the truth  
did not always mean  
a beating;   
though many of my truths  
must have grieved him  
before the end.  
  
How I miss my father!   
He cooked like a person  
dancing  
in a yoga meditation  
and craved the voluptuous  
sharing  
of good food.  
  
Now I look and cook just like him:   
my brain light;   
tossing this and that  
into the pot;   
seasoning none of my life  
the same way twice; happy to feed  
whoever strays my way.  
  
He would have grown  
to admire  
the woman I've become:   
cooking, writing, chopping wood,   
staring into the fire.

**Alice Walker**

<https://sites.google.com/site/symbolpedia/0-old-essays/analysis-of-poem-at-thirty-nine>

<http://voices.yahoo.com/analysis-alice-walkers-poem-thirty-nine-10198995.html>

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