"An Augusta (Maine) young woman who possesses a variety of talents and who has shown great promise of literary and artistic achievement is Miss Alicia Kay Smith. She has already proved herself a poet of no mean ability, having had several poems accepted by various newspapers and magazines.

"Clever with the paint brush too, Miss Smith has combined two talents and created the Dorothy Ann Series on the lines of the 'Sonny Saying Series' which appears in many newspapers today. The success of her Dorothy Ann Series is evidenced by the fact that she has found a ready market for them. The drawing depicts a curly-haired little miss against a pretty background, and beneath is the legend in rhyme.

"She was born in Union, Maine, about twenty years ago, surrounded by the same hills which inspired Edna St. Vincent Millay. Her parents are Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Smith of New Bedford, Mass., and Augusta, Me., and who lived in Portland and Sanford before coming to Augusta. She was graduated from Cony High School in 1931, attended Farmington Normal School for a year and last year was a student at Oak Grove Seminary in Vassalboro.

"Since a child Miss Smith has been writing, at first, she wrote purely from her heart, and only lately has she been seriously studying poetry form and art.

"Her poems have a wistful, youthful tone for which many acclaimed poets strive. Critics have said that her
work shows richness, understanding and a remarkably fine touch. While most of her work is in free verse she has also written sonnets and experimented successfully with rhymed verse forms.

- Rosamond Cole

in Lewiston (Me.) Evening Journal

(above taken from Foreword of Tall Children.)

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Interesting Brochure of Verse by Talented Augusta Young Woman

Alicia Kay Smith, Whose “Tall Children” is on Book Stands, Passed Her Early Childhood Amongst Camden Hills Which Inspired Much of Edna St. Vincent Millay’s Work

Christmas shoppers in Augusta and other Maine cities were pleased this week to find on the shelves of gift shops a book of poems, “Tall Children,” written by Miss Alicia Kay Smith of Augusta. The book is published in brochure form and contains verses which have appeared in national poetry magazines as well as Maine newspapers and magazines.

A foreword by Miss Rosamond Cole of Augusta explains that Miss Smith is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Smith of New Bedford, Mass., and Augusta. She was graduated from Cony High school in 1931, and was a student for a year at Farmington Normal School and Oak Grove Seminary.

Miss Smith was born in Union, Maine, where she was surrounded by the selfsame hills which inspired the nation’s foremost woman poet, Edna St. Vincent Millay, when she was a child. Her poetic efforts began with childhood, the foreword explains, although it was only recently when she ceased writing “purely from the heart” and turned to “seriously studying poetry and art.”

Range of Interpretation

Miss Smith’s first book betrays a whimsical and appealing hesitancy between the stark earth and the gossamer reaches of joyous fancy. Her wide range in this respect appears to give her place in the following definition of a poet by Shakespeare in “Midsummer Night’s Dream.”

“The poet’s eye, in fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet’s pen
Turns then to shapes and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.”

The following poem, written by Miss Smith at the age of 12, indicates that she got away to an early and discouraging start, resigning herself to the fate that a poet’s row, on “airy nothing,” was going to be a hard one to hoe.

---

A Dreamer’s Life

A dreamer’s life
Is a lonely one
If he hasn’t his poems
Or his art.
For he has no friends
Save nature and sun,
No words—
Save those of his heart.

A few years later, however, Miss Smith decided to set forth in five terse stanzas that she not only had found her art, but her earthly inhabitants:

Cinquain

I have
Loved many things,
A misty dawn . . . the dew,
Some words that have been said, and too—
People.

That the combination was to lead her to a realization of something vital is shown in a poem where she finds her way into a weaver’s heart:

To A Factory Girl

What do you think of
The whole day long I
Working away at your loom?
What’s that your humming—
A wistful song
Or just a work-a-day tune?

Some times I fancy
(Watching your fingers—
Long and Reeling and brown)
That a silken thread lingers
Before it winds slowly away
To a costly gown.

In spite of all this one is not allowed to assume that the poet would prefer a noisy cocktail party to a quiet nook, on high or here below:

Tea Time in Heaven

If God Himself should ask you
(When you are dead,), your will,
Say, “I’d like a quiet corner
Where grass is green and still.”

I shall not care to join you
In Eternity,
If angels hover all about
And Saints come to tea!
December 18, 1934

Miss Alicia Kay Smith
96 Grove Street
Augusta, Maine

Dear Miss Smith:

Your delightful book, Tall Children, came to the Library this morning, and it is with pleasure and pride that we congratulate you upon its publication.

We are grateful to you for including the Maine Author Collection in your list of recipients. Please accept our sincere thanks for your kind gift.

Very truly yours

State Librarian
Presenting!

Over The Moon's Edge

by

Alicia Kay Smith

C.A.A. Parker

Medford, Mass.
ALICIA KAY SMITH

author of

TALL CHILDREN, 1934

with poems appearing in

Modern American Poetry, 1933

Threads in Tapestry, 1934

Oak Leaves, 1936, 1937

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October 8, 1937

Miss Alicia Kay Smith  
59½ Green Street  
Augusta, Maine  

Dear Alicia:

The leaflet announcing your new volume of verse, OVER THE MOON'S EDGE, is charming, and the library will want a copy for lending purposes. Will you please reserve one for us, according to the enclosed card, and send it, with a bill, when it is published.

You very kindly inscribed a copy of TALL CHILDREN for the Maine Author Collection, and we hope you will want to do the same with your new book. Certainly it should be in the collection with the first one. We are looking forward to OVER THE MOON'S EDGE, and wish it the success which it merits.

I don't find any biographical information in our files, and I wonder if, at your convenience, you would be willing to write a few paragraphs of this nature for us. We like to have all available material of this kind on our authors, and of course that makes your file incomplete.

May I add my personal congratulations to those of the library on your second book, and also my best wishes for a successful continuation of a literary career so auspiciously launched.

Sincerely,

hm
November 30, 1943

Miss Alicia Kay Smith
59½ Green Street
Augusta, Maine

Dear Alicia:

The beautifully illustrated copy of OVER THE MOON'S EDGE for the Maine Author Collection was received with pleasure, and a sense of satisfaction in having it at last included in the exhibit.

Thank you very much for the gift, and for the added interest and value of personally painted illustrations.

Now we notice that presently you will have another book available for those who appreciate your charming verse. We shall hope that an inscribed copy may come to the Maine Author Collection; and we shall of course see that an order goes to you for a regular lending copy. Good wishes to GOOD NIGHT, LITTLE ELF.

Sincerely yours

hmj
Secretary
December 3, 1945

Miss Alicia Kay Smith
C/O Falmouth Publishing House
4 Milk Street
Portland, Maine

Dear Alicia:

The local newspaper brings us news of your new book, and we extend congratulations. We are adding it to our order list at once, of course; but at present we write in behalf of the Maine Author Collection, to which you will remember you have generously inscribed and presented your other books.

We hope that we may look forward to placing ONLY IN WHISPERS there, also.

You have our good wishes for the book, and for your current occupation. The paper says you have been there two years -- how time flies! I hope you feel that way, too, and you probably do, for the work is surely a happy outlet for your talent.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection
Sunday

Dear Hilda,

This is just a note to let you know that I am thinking of you and wanted you to know about my new book. Enclosed is the announcement.

With kindest thoughts and best wishes to you and the library staff.

Yours,

Alicia

Only in Whispers
by ALICIA KAY SMITH

**Freedom**

Though all the gates are open
And roads beyond are free
I let you go
Because I know
Each one leads back to me.

Ted Malone has selected this as a Between-the-Bookends poem in his recent Victory volume, and the publishers of the Falmouth books are pleased to announce that it will be included in Alicia Kay Smith’s new book “ONLY IN WHISPERS.”

“ONLY IN WHISPERS” is the fourth book from the pen of Alicia Kay Smith. You will read, and reread, these poems with pleasure and with thought; and often your breath will catch with delight at the lucid beauty of an image or the inevitable rightness of her phrases.

Alicia Kay Smith’s book is an investment in beauty.

FALMOUTH PUBLISHING HOUSE, INC.
4 Milk Street
P.O. Box 644
Portland, Maine

Please reserve for me ......... copies of ONLY IN WHISPERS at $2.00 a copy.

[ ] autographed [ ] money order enclosed
[ ] check enclosed

Name...........................................................................

Address...........................................................................
May 27, 1948

Miss Alicia Kay Smith
1957 Mayview Drive
Hollywood 27, California

Dear Alicia:

Something happened! We don't know what it was, but we hope it won't continue. The Maine Author Collection has no inscribed presentation copy of ONLY IN WHISPERS!

We bought a copy for the lending section of the library, of course. I was particularly interested to observe the title, having suspected the source before I saw the book. It's a lovely collection, really, and you are to be congratulated -- not only upon the poems themselves, but upon your perseverance and energy in continuing to write poetry, while your days are so thoroughly occupied.

Good fortune attend you, and we hope that ONLY IN WHISPERS will yet be added to your other work in the collection.

Sincerely yours

hmj

In Charge of
Maine Author Collection
June 14, 1948

Dear Hilda,

Thank you for your thoughtfulness in writing me about "Only in Whispers" — I knew that some day you would recognize it, or rather, I knew you would know the source immediately, and might one day write me about it. . . .

The book is now out of print, at least I have sent in several orders, but have heard nothing from Falmouth.

If and when there is a reprint, I will be happy to send the library a copy for the Maine Authors collection.

With kindest regards,

Yours,

Alicia Kay Smith

1957 Mayview Drive
Hollywood 27
California
June 29, 1949

Miss Alicia Kay Smith
1957 Mayview Drive
Hollywood 27, California

Dear Alicia:

Thank you so much for remembering the Maine Author Collection with an autographed copy of ONLY IN WHISPERS. We have regretted its absence, and are more than pleased that your books are now complete.

It was nice to see you, if only briefly, and we hope that some day when you are east again, you will have more than a minute to say hello.

Again, thank you for the collection, and best wishes for continued success.

Sincerely