

## [Alicia Ostriker: Poem](#) [1]

February 17, 2014 [Honoring Rukeyser](#) [2]

### **Ode to New York City**

You are an island, a granite crust on a black platter of rivers,  
You are the bus terminal of hope, you are a lost umbrella,  
You exist as a landing field for helicopters.

You appeal to people who love water, people who want to fly,  
People who want to show off and be bad, who get a kick  
From Champagne. I am only looking for a toaster, and here

Two women stand behind a counter at the hardware store minding their cash registers  
In their red apron uniforms. A points to B and says *You know*  
*What she did Saturday? She went skinny-dipping.*

I have to ask where. B looks pleased with herself. *The Harlem River.* No fooling,  
It's where showoff boys used to dive and we giggling girls used to watch  
Those bad boys. Times do change. B says *I have to let my bad girl out sometimes.*



---

## Art Information

- "[New York](#) [3]" © Michael Connors; morgueFile license.

## Alicia Ostriker: Poem

Published on Talking Writing (<https://mail.talkingwriting.com>)

---



Alicia Ostriker's most recent book of poems is *The Old Woman, the Tulip, and the Dog*. Her most recent volume of critical essays is *Dancing at the Devil's Party: Poetry, Politics, and the Erotic*.

Ostriker teaches in the Low-Residency MFA Program in Poetry and Poetry in Translation at Drew University.

**Source URL:** <https://mail.talkingwriting.com/alicia-ostriker-poem>

### Links:

[1] <https://mail.talkingwriting.com/alicia-ostriker-poem>

[2] <https://mail.talkingwriting.com/talkingwriting-categories/spotlight-honoring-rukeyser>

[3] <http://morguefile.com/archive/display/4173>