

GRAYWOLF PRESS



WINTER 2020





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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Cover design: Kapo Ng
Cover art: Devra Goldstein

Danez Smith is our president

Homie

Poems

DANEZ SMITH

Homie is Danez Smith’s magnificent anthem about the saving grace of friendship. Rooted in the loss of one of Smith’s close friends, this book comes out of the search for joy and intimacy within a nation where both can seem scarce and getting scarcer. In poems of rare power and generosity, Smith acknowledges that in a country overrun by violence, xenophobia, and disparity, and in a body defined by race, queerness, and diagnosis, it can be hard to survive, even harder to remember reasons for living. But then the phone lights up, or a shout comes up to the window, and family—blood and chosen—arrives with just the right food and some redemption. Part friendship diary, part bright elegy, part war cry, *Homie* is the exuberant new book written for Danez and for Danez’s friends and for you and for yours.

**& colin kaepernick is my president, who kneels on the air
bent toward a branch, throwing apples down to the children & vets**

**& rihanna is my president, walking out of global summits
with wineglass in hand, our taxes returned in gold
to dust our faces into coins**

**& my mama is my president, her grace stunts
on amazing, brown hands breaking brown bread over
mouths of the hungry until there are none unfed**

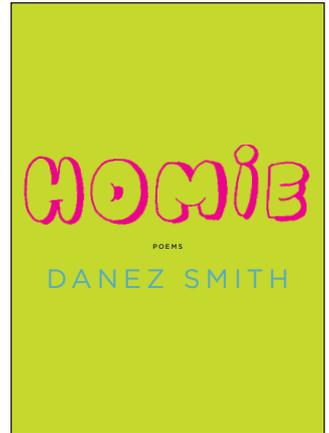
**& my grandma is my president & her cabinet is her cabinet
cause she knows to trust what the pan knows
how the skillet wins the war**

—from “my president”

Praise for *Don’t Call Us Dead*

“These poems can’t make history vanish, but they can contend against it with the force of a restorative imagination. Smith’s work is about that imagination—its role in repairing and sustaining communities, and in making the world more bearable.”

—*The New Yorker*



Poetry, 104 pages, 6½ x 9

Paperback, \$16.00

January

978-1-64445-010-9

Ebook Available

Brit.: Chatto & Windus

Trans., audio, dram.: Graywolf Press

1st ser.: Author c/o Graywolf Press

ALSO AVAILABLE

Don't Call Us Dead, Poetry.

Paperback (978-1-55597-785-6),

\$16.00

DANEZ SMITH is the author of *Don't Call Us Dead*, winner of the Forward Prize for Best Collection and a finalist for the National Book Award, and *[insert] boy*, winner of the Kate Tufts Discovery Award. They live in Minneapolis.

An excerpt from *Little Constructions*

There are no differences between men and women. No differences. Except one. Men want to know what sort of gun it is. Women just want the gun. The door of the gunshop went ding! on Friday as Jetty Doe burst through it on a mission. This was the annoyed Jetty Doe, the one who had knifed her mammy once, and not her less-annoyed cousin called Jotty, who hadn't. Doe headed straight for the gun counter and interrupted a conversation about ufology.

'I'm telling you, Tom,' the man in front of the counter was saying to the owner behind it, 'I'm telling you. Any extraterrestrial that doesn't look as we look can't have our best interests at—'

'Want a gun!' cried Doe, cutting in across them. 'Gimme a gun! Gimme that gun there!'

The startled owner looked at her. He recognised her too. It was one of those Doe women, the one whose name began with 'J'. He looked along her thrusting finger to the Kalashnikov displayed magnificently in the counter case in front of them.

'This?' he said. 'Well, that's a—'

'Don't care. Gimme it.'

'But don't you want—'

'What?'

'With a weapon—'

'What?'

'You can't just—'

'What? What!'

She stared at him, lip curling, snout forming, snarl gathering. What was this creature? she thought. The owner, meanwhile, decided to mistake the stare, bared teeth and strange little throatic sounds for a settling down to listen, for a quiet and graceful episode of listening. She was now going to listen to what he had to say. He opened his mouth.

'Shut up! Just shut up! Gimme a gun and shut up, will ye?' she said.

The darkly comic second novel from the author
of the Man Booker Prize winner *Milkman*,
now available in the US

Little Constructions

A Novel

ANNA BURNS

In the small town of Tiptoe Floorboard, the Doe clan, a close-knit family of criminals and victims, has the run of the place. Yet there are signs that patriarch John Doe's reign may be coming to an end. When Jetty Doe breaks into a gun store and makes off with a Kalashnikov, the stage is set for a violent confrontation. But while Jetty is making her way across town in a taxi, an elusive, chatty narrator takes us on a wild journey, zooming in and out on various members of the Doe family with long, digressive riffs that chase down the causes and repercussions of Jetty's act.

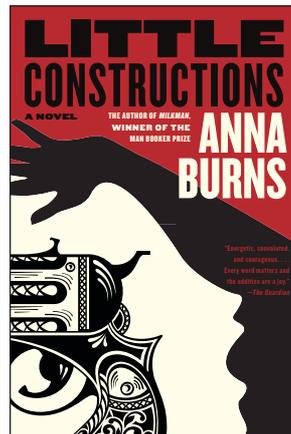
Before *Milkman* took the world by storm after winning the Man Booker Prize, Anna Burns had already honed her distinctive voice. In her second novel, *Little Constructions*, she exhibits the same linguistic brio, coruscating wit, and scintillating insight into men, women, and the roots of violence. A wickedly funny novel that swoops and spirals as it examines the long shadow of abuse and violent crime, *Little Constructions* explores what transpires when unspeakable realities, long hidden from view, can no longer be denied.

"Prose so profound and so punchy, at once scattergun and forensic. . . .
Every line leaves a darkly sparkling residue you won't be able to wash off."

—*The Telegraph* (UK)

"An exceptionally bold, violent, and blackly comic tale. . . . If you give yourself up to Burns's delirious imagination, you'll find much salient wisdom."

—*Financial Times* (UK)



Fiction, 304 pages, 5 x 7¾

Paperback, \$16.00

February

978-1-64445-013-0

Ebook Available

Brit.: HarperCollins Ltd
Trans., audio, dram.: David
Grossman Literary Agency Ltd

ALSO AVAILABLE

Milkman, Fiction, Paperback
(978-1-64445-000-0), \$16.00

ANNA BURNS was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland. She is the author of three novels, including *Milkman* and *No Bones*, and the novella *Mostly Hero*. She lives in East Sussex, England.

An Excerpt from *Postcolonial Love Poem*

I've been taught bloodstones can cure a snakebite,
can stop the bleeding—most people forgot this
when the war ended. The war ended
depending on which war you mean: those we started,
before those, millennia ago and onward,
those which started me, which I lost and won—
these ever-blooming wounds.
I was built by wage. So I wage love and worse—
always another campaign to march across
a desert night for the cannon flash of your pale skin
settling in a silver lagoon of smoke at your breast.
I dismount my dark horse, bend to you there, deliver you
the hard pull of all my thirsts—
I learned *Drink* in a country of drought.
We pleasure to hurt, leave marks
the size of stones—each a cabochon polished
by our mouths. I, your lapidary, your lapidary wheel
turning—green mottled red—
the jaspers of our desires.
There are wildflowers in my desert
which take up to twenty years to bloom.
The seeds sleep like geodes beneath hot feldspar sand
until a flash flood bolts the arroyo, lifting them
in its copper current, opens them with memory—
they remember what their god whispered
into their ribs: *Wake up and ache for your life.*

—from “Postcolonial Love Poem”

Praise for Natalie Diaz

“Diaz both embraces and subverts mythology in whatever form it shows up—Indigenous, Western, counter-culture, it doesn’t matter. . . . Diaz so elegantly negotiates experience, tradition, and myth that show us the range of her skill as a writer. She is a poet who understands tradition but is not beholden to it. She is a poet who will help us write into the future as she excavates the past and interrogates the present.”

—Adrian Matejka

Natalie Diaz's highly anticipated
follow-up to *When My Brother Was an Aztec*,
winner of an American Book Award

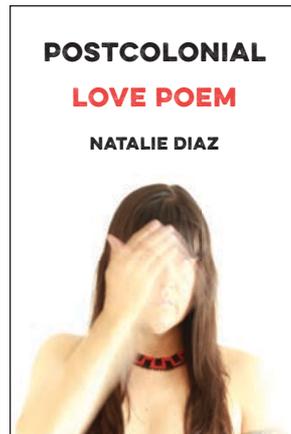
Postcolonial Love Poem

Poems

NATALIE DIAZ

Postcolonial Love Poem is an anthem of desire against erasure. Natalie Diaz's brilliant second collection demands that every body carried in its pages—bodies of language, land, rivers, suffering brothers, enemies, and lovers—be touched and held as beloveds. Through these poems, the wounds inflicted by America onto an indigenous people are allowed to bloom desire and tenderness: "Let me call my anxiety, *desire*, then. / Let me call it, *a garden*." In this new lyrical landscape, the bodies of indigenous, Latinx, black, and brown women are simultaneously the body politic and the body ecstatic. In claiming an autonomy of desire, language is both riddled with light and pushed to its dark edges, the astonishing desert, dunefields, and forests where pleasure and love are both grief and joy, violence and sensuality.

Diaz defies the conditions from which she writes, a nation whose creation predicated the diminishment of bodies like hers and the people she loves: "I am doing my best to not become a museum / of myself. I am doing my best to breathe in and out. // I am begging: *Let me be lonely but not invisible*." *Postcolonial Love Poem* unravels notions of American goodness and creates something more powerful than hope—a future, a matrix of the choices we make now, and in these poems, Diaz chooses the possibility of love.



Poetry, 80 pages, 6 x 9

Paperback, \$16.00

March

978-1-64445-014-7

Ebook Available

Brit., trans., audio, dram.:

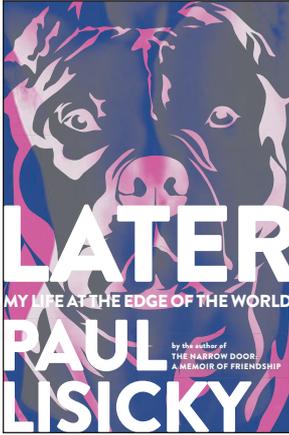
Graywolf Press

1st ser.: Author c/o Graywolf Press



© Lamp Left Media/Alonso Parra

NATALIE DIAZ is the author of the award-winning poetry collection *When My Brother Was an Aztec*. She has received many honors, including a MacArthur Fellowship, a USA Fellowship, a Lannan Literary Fellowship, and a Native Arts and Cultures Foundation Artist Fellowship. She is Mojave and an enrolled member of the Gila River Indian Tribe. She teaches at Arizona State University.



Nonfiction, 240 pages, 5½ x 8¼

Paperback, \$16.00

March

978-1-64445-016-1

Ebook Available

Brit., audio: Graywolf Press

1st ser., trans., dram.:

Frances Goldin Literary Agency

ALSO AVAILABLE

Famous Builder, Nonfiction,
Paperback (978-1-55597-369-8),
\$15.00

Lawnboy, Fiction, Paperback
(978-1-55597-448-0), \$16.00

The Narrow Door, Nonfiction,
Paperback (978-1-55597-728-3),
\$16.00

PAUL LISICKY is the author of five books, including *Famous Builder* and *Lawnboy*. He has received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts, among others. He teaches in the MFA program at Rutgers University and lives in Brooklyn.

A stunning portrait of community,
identity, and sexuality, by the critically
acclaimed author of *The Narrow Door*

Later

My Life at the Edge of the World

PAUL LISICKY

When Paul Lisicky arrived in Provincetown in the early 1990s, he was leaving behind a history of family trauma to live in a place outside of time, known for its values of inclusion, acceptance, and art. In this idyllic haven, Lisicky searches for love and connection and comes into his own as he finds a sense of belonging. At the same time, the center of this community is consumed by the AIDS crisis, and the very structure of town life is being rewired out of necessity: What might this utopia look like during a time of dystopia?

Later dramatizes a spectacular yet ravaged place and a unique era when more fully becoming one's self collided with the realization that ongoingness couldn't be taken for granted, and staying alive from moment to moment exacted absolute attention. Following the success of his acclaimed memoir, *The Narrow Door*, Lisicky fearlessly explores the body, queerness, love, illness, community, and belonging in this masterful, ingenious new book.

Praise for *The Narrow Door*

"An elegy, an apologia, and a triumph." —*The New York Times Book Review*

"Achingly gorgeous."

—*Chicago Tribune*

"Stunningly done."

—*Slate*

"Raw, wry, and meditative."

—*The Boston Globe*

"So special and at times so unsettling."

—*Los Angeles Times*

An unforgettably exuberant and potent novel
by a writer at the height of her powers

Barn 8

A Novel

DEB OLIN UNFERTH

Two auditors for the US egg industry go rogue and conceive a plot to steal a million chickens in the middle of the night—an entire egg farm’s worth of animals. Janey and Cleveland—one a spirited former runaway and the other an officious head of audits—assemble a precarious, quarrelsome team and descend on the farm on a dark spring evening. A series of catastrophes ensues.

Deb Olin Unferth’s wildly inventive but utterly plausible novel is a heist story of a very unusual sort. Swirling with a rich array of voices, *Barn 8* takes readers into the minds of these renegades: a farmer’s daughter, a former director of undercover investigations, hundreds of activists, a forest ranger who suddenly comes upon forty thousand hens, and a security guard who is left on an empty farm for years. There are glimpses twenty thousand years into the future to see what chickens might evolve into on our contaminated planet. We hear what hens think happens when they die. In the end the cracked hearts of these indelible characters, their earnest efforts to heal themselves, and their radical actions will lead them to ruin or revelation.

Funny, whimsical, philosophical, and heartbreaking, *Barn 8* ultimately asks: What constitutes meaningful action in a world so in need of change? Unferth comes at this question with striking ingenuity, razor-sharp wit, and ferocious passion. *Barn 8* is a rare comic-political drama, a tour de force for our time.

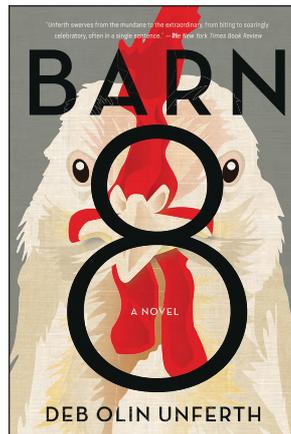
Praise for *Wait Till You See Me Dance*

“Unferth swerves from the mundane to the extraordinary, from biting to soaringly celebratory, often in a single sentence.”

—*The New York Times Book Review*

“One of the most important voices in fiction.”

—*Newsweek*



Fiction, 256 pages, 5½ x 8¼

Paperback, \$16.00

March

978-1-64445-015-4

Ebook Available

Brit.: Graywolf Press

Trans., 1st ser., dram.: McCormick

Literary Agency

Audio: Recorded Books

ALSO AVAILABLE

Wait Till You See Me Dance, Fiction,

Paperback (978-1-55597-768-9),

\$16.00

DEB OLIN UNFERTH is the author of six books. She has received a Guggenheim Fellowship and three Pushcart Prizes, and was a National Book Critics Circle Award finalist. Her work has appeared in *Granta*, *Harper's*, *McSweeney's*, and the *Paris Review*.

An excerpt from *American Harvest*

The buildings [in Crowell, Texas] are slightly disheveled. In the middle of the square is an ochre-colored brick building, which in places belies its original rust color; has the sun bleached the bricks? War memorials pop up around the town hall with all the names of the local veterans, which seems to suggest that once there were enough men not only for football, but for war. Emily tells me that the town hall is where we will go if there is a tornado.

In every town, Eric has an arrangement either with an RV park or a farmer who can house us in a spare lot. In Crowell, we stay in an RV park, a gravel covered area with allotted campsites for large vehicles. Each campsite comes with its own designated picnic table and firepit. We can also hook up electricity, water and sewage. The combines and trucks are parked south of town by the elevator.

We are the first ones here for harvest. There are no other combines or crews and Eric is proud to be first. It means he is ready. It used to be that dozens of harvesters came to town. There was so much custom work, the town's excitement was palpable in a sign that read: "Welcome Harvesters!" This year there is no sign.

Eric has, over the course of thirty years of custom harvesting, watched such towns die one by one. It is a point he makes to me repeatedly. Eric and Emily will observe as we drive along: a movie theater was built here and the drive-in theater went away; a Walmart came in here and people moved here for jobs; the Walmart went to the town next door and this town died. With all these changes, the people—especially the young people—have fled, though the fields in the Great Plains have remained.

Farmland is disappearing in the United States. From 1982 to 2007 more than twenty-three million acres of agricultural land were converted to developments, with Texas, California, and Florida leading the list of states shedding arable land. Fields located closest to urban centers are vanishing the most quickly, as they are the most convenient for new malls, offices, and housing. And these fields are often the most productive and people tend to settle down in a location where they can make food.

Everyone needs to eat.

An epic story of the American wheat harvest,
the politics of food, and the culture
of the Great Plains

American Harvest

God, Country, and Farming in the Heartland

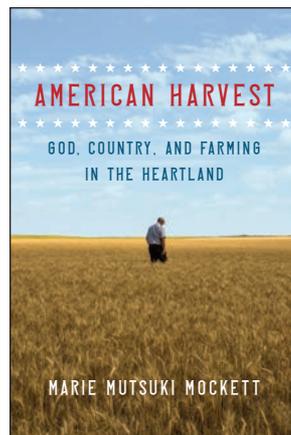
MARIE MUTSUKI MOCKETT

For over one hundred years, the Mockett family has owned a seven-thousand-acre wheat farm in the panhandle of Nebraska, where Marie Mutsuki Mockett's father was raised. Mockett, who grew up in bohemian Carmel, California, with her father and her Japanese mother, knew little about farming when she inherited this land. Her father had all but forsworn it.

In *American Harvest*, Mockett accompanies a group of evangelical Christian wheat harvesters through the heartland at the invitation of Eric Wolgemuth, the conservative farmer who has cut her family's fields for decades. As Mockett follows Wolgemuth's crew on the trail of ripening wheat from Texas to Idaho, they contemplate what Wolgemuth refers to as "the divide," inadvertently peeling back layers of the American story to expose its contradictions and unhealed wounds. She joins the crew in the fields, attends church, and struggles to adapt to the rhythms of rural life, all the while continually reminded of her own status as a person who signals "not white," but who people she encounters can't quite categorize.

American Harvest is an extraordinary evocation of the land and a thoughtful exploration of ingrained beliefs, from evangelical skepticism of evolution to cosmopolitan assumptions about food production and farming. With exquisite lyricism and humanity, this astonishing book attempts to reconcile competing versions of our national story.

Praise for *Where the Dead Pause, and the Japanese Say Goodbye*
"[Mockett] has the ability, fully available only to those on the margins, 'to see through more than one set of eyes.'" —*The New York Times Book Review*
"Part memoir, part travelogue and part investigation into the rituals and beliefs surrounding the 'great parting' in Japan. . . . Fascinating, wide-reaching."
—*San Francisco Chronicle*



Nonfiction, 416 pages, 6 x 9

Hardcover, \$28.00

April

978-1-64445-017-8

Ebook Available

Brit., trans., 1st ser., audio, dram.:
Trident Media Group

ALSO AVAILABLE

Picking Bones from Ash, Fiction,
Paperback (978-1-55597-576-0),
\$15.00

MARIE MUTSUKI

MOCKETT is the author of a novel, *Picking Bones from Ash*, and a memoir, *Where the Dead Pause, and the Japanese Say Goodbye*, which was a finalist for the PEN Open Book Award. She lives in San Francisco.



**A moving and wide-ranging collection of essays
by the author of *Letter to a Future Lover***

I Will Take the Answer

Essays

ANDER MONSON

The idea of connection permeates *I Will Take the Answer*, Ander Monson’s fourth book of utterly original and intelligent essays. How is our present connected to our past and future? How do neural connections form memories, and why do we recall them when we do? And how do we connect with one another in meaningful ways, across time and space?

In the opening essay, which extends across the book in brief subsequent pieces, a trip through a storm sewer in Tucson inspires Monson to trace the city’s relationship to Jared Lee Loughner, the gunman who shot Gabrielle Giffords and killed six bystanders, along with how violence is produced and how we grieve and honor the dead. With the formally inventive “In in River,” he ruminates on water in a waterless city and the structures we use to attempt to contain and control it. Monson also visits the exuberantly nerdy kingdom of a Renaissance faire, and elaborates on the enduring appeal of sad songs through the lens of March Sadness, an online competition that he cofounded, an engaging riff on NCAA basketball tournament brackets in which sad songs replace teams.

As personal and idiosyncratic as the best mixtape, *I Will Take the Answer* showcases Monson’s deep thinking and broad-ranging interests, his sly wit, his soft spot for heavy metal, and his ability to tunnel deeply into the odd and revealing, sometimes subterranean, worlds of American life.

Praise for *Letter to a Future Lover*

“A breathtakingly original, thoughtful consideration of what it means to be a reader—or a writer, or a human being. . . . [Monson] is one of America’s best living authors. . . . A masterpiece, filled with compassion and brilliance.”

—NPR

Nonfiction, 240 pages, 5½ x 8¼

Paperback, \$16.00

February

978-1-64445-011-6

Ebook Available

Brit., trans., 1st ser., dram.:

The Wylie Agency

Audio: Graywolf Press

ALSO AVAILABLE

Neck Deep and Other Predicaments,
Nonfiction, Paperback
(978-1-55597-459-6), \$15.00

Vanishing Point, Nonfiction,
Paperback (978-1-55597-554-8),
\$16.00

Letter to a Future Lover, Nonfiction,
Hardcover (978-1-55597-706-1),
\$22.00



© Samuel Ace

An unsettling, wildly imaginative
collection of stories

The Gnome Stories

Stories

ANDER MONSON

The Gnome Stories focuses on characters who are loners in the truest sense; who are in the process of recovering from mental, physical, or emotional trauma; and who find solace—or at least a sense of purpose—in peculiar jobs and pursuits.

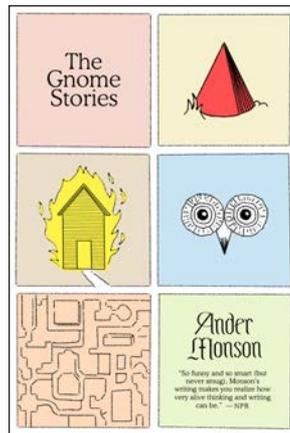
A man whose wife has left him is robbed, so he decides to start doing his own breaking and entering into his neighbors' homes. When another man's girlfriend is cryogenically frozen by her family after a car accident, he becomes a maintenance worker at the cryogenic facility, eavesdropping on visitors as they whisper secrets to their frozen loved ones. A woman serves as an assistant to the Starvationist, whose methods to help clients lose large amounts of weight are unorthodox, sadistic—and utterly failproof. Another woman and her robot assistant have been hired to tinker with the troubling memories inside a celebrity's brain.

With *The Gnome Stories*, Ander Monson presents eleven unforgettable stories about oddly American situations, as surreal as urban legends and at the same time perfectly mundane.

Praise for Ander Monson

"[A] writer who knows the workings of language as intimately as a cleric knows his holy books. . . . Monson knows the cadences and rhythms and syntax that transform the day-to-day into the divine."

—*Los Angeles Review of Books*



Fiction, 216 pages, 5½ x 8¼

Paperback, \$16.00

February

978-1-64445-012-3

Ebook Available

Brit., trans., 1st ser., dram.:

The Wylie Agency

Audio: Graywolf Press

ANDER MONSON is the author of *Other Electricities*, a finalist for the New York Public Library Young Lions Fiction Award, and four essay collections, including *Letter to a Future Lover* and *Vanishing Point*, a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award. He lives in Tucson, where he teaches at the University of Arizona.



Poetry, 80 pages, 6 x 9

Paperback, \$16.00

April

978-1-64445-018-5

Ebook Available

Brit., trans., audio, dram.:

Graywolf Press

1st ser.: Author c/o Graywolf Press

Winner of the Walt Whitman Award
of the Academy of American Poets,
selected by Li-Young Lee

The More Extravagant Feast

Poems

LEAH NAOMI GREEN

The More Extravagant Feast focuses on the trophic exchanges of a human body with the world via pregnancy, motherhood, and interconnection—the acts of making and sustaining other bodies from one’s own, and one’s own from the larger world. Leah Naomi Green writes from attentiveness to the vast availability and capacity of the weedy, fecund earth and from her own human place within more-than-human life, death, and birth. Lyrically and spiritually rich, striving toward honesty and understanding, *The More Extravagant Feast* is an extraordinary book of awareness of our dependency on ecological systems—seen and unseen.

**When I come back in, she asks me to draw a picture
of her father on the hill. I pick her up—the miracle
of her lungs that grew inside me,
kept long dark—her working heart
let out into the rounder world,
the more extravagant feast.**

—from “The More Extravagant Feast”

“This book keeps faithful company with the world and earns its name. The darkness and suffering of living on earth are assumed in this work, woven throughout the fabric of its lineated perceptions and insights, and yet it is ultimately informed by the deep logic of compassion (is there a deeper human logic?) and enacts the wisdom of desire and fecundity reconciled with knowledge of death and boundedness.”

—Li-Young Lee

LEAH NAOMI GREEN is the author of *The Ones We Have*, winner of the Flying Trout Press Chapbook Prize. She teaches English and environmental studies at Washington and Lee University and lives in an ecological intentional community in Virginia.

“Jane Kenyon had a virtually faultless ear.
She was an exquisite master of the art of poetry.”

—Wendell Berry

The Best Poems of Jane Kenyon

Poems

JANE KENYON

Published twenty-five years after her untimely death, *The Best Poems of Jane Kenyon* presents the essential work of one of America’s most cherished poets—celebrated for her tenacity, spirit, and grace. In their inquisitive explorations and direct language, Kenyon’s poems disclose a quiet certainty in the natural world and a lifelong dialogue with her faith and her questioning of it. As a crucial aspect of these beloved poems of companionship, she confronts her struggle with severe depression on its own stark terms. Selected by Kenyon’s husband, Donald Hall, just before his death in 2018, *The Best Poems of Jane Kenyon* collects work from across a life and career that will be, as she writes in one poem, “simply lasting.”

**There’s just no accounting for happiness,
or the way it turns up like a prodigal
who comes back to the dust at your feet
having squandered a fortune far away.**

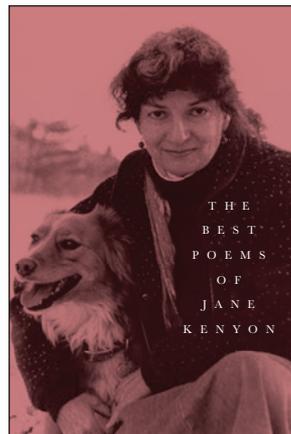
**And how can you not forgive?
You make a feast in honor of what
was lost, and take from its place the finest
garment, which you saved for an occasion
you could not imagine, and you weep night and day
to know that you were not abandoned,
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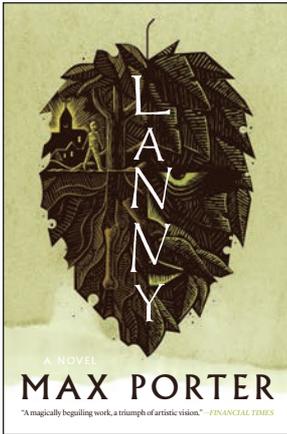
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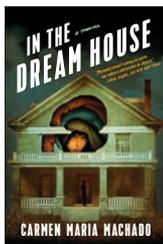
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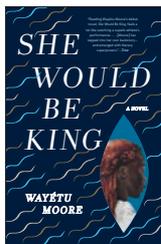
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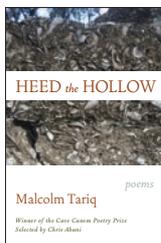
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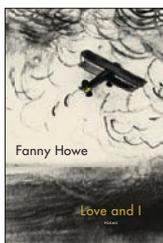
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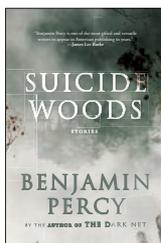
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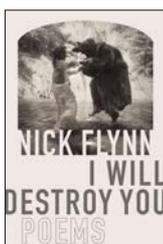
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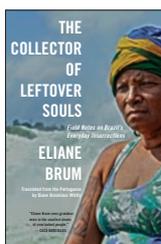
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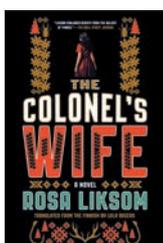
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