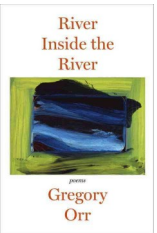
River Inside the River [1]



view in catalog [2]

What a beautiful collection Gregory Orr?s tenth book of poetry is--moving, lyrical, concise, thought-provoking and full of a rich humanity. Orr has had a difficult life. As he describes in one poem, he accidentally shot his brother in a hunting accident as a child and his mother died a few months later. He doesn?t say from heartache but that is implied.

The book is divided into three sections. The first ?Eden and After? offers an overabundance of infinitive titles including: ?To Speak,? ?To See,? ?To Write,? ?To Embrace,? ?To Stray,? and a couple I can?t mention here. The poems are much deeper and broader than the titles might imply. And yes, they are about Adam and Eve?s time in the Garden of Eden and their later fall as these lines from ?To Build? reveal: ?No longer could they rest / Each night inside / God?s breath / As in a tent that kept / Them from the cold.?

The second section is more literary. It?s called ?The City of Poetry.? Individual poets are mentioned including: Francois Villon, Coleridge, /Rimbaud, Sappho, etc. but it?s more a praise song to poetry itself: ?There?s only one river / That flows / Through the city / But different poems / Call it different names.?

The final section, used as the book title also, dives deeper into poetry revealing how it affects the self, helping to heal our sorrows: ?First there was shatter. / Then, aftermath. // Only later and only slowly / We gathered words / Against our loss.?

Reading *River Inside the River* [3] is almost a form of meditation that allows you to connect to one poet's image of Eden and our flawed but beautiful world.

Posted by Dory L. on September 16, 2013

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