



The Sea at Truro: Poems

Nancy Willard

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From the acclaimed poet of *In the Salt Marsh* comes a dazzling collection about the magic hiding in the ordinary days of our past and present. Willard turns a keen eye on the natural world that witnesses these revelations, and the myriad, often surprising ways in which it intersects with our own human lot.

Willard shows us time and again that “In me nothing of childhood is lost.” She recaptures for us not only the fleeting, distant shreds of a charmed, innocent youth, but brings back the people who have been loved and lost. She tells us of the man whose sister appears to him the night after her memorial service, and of the time her grandfather called her mother three days after he died, “. . . and she with her arms full / of wind-washed laundry / just freed from the line.” She gives back to us Walt Whitman, “eating / his supper from a sheet of brown paper.” She lends voice not only to the loved ones with whom we have parted ways but also to the plant and animal lives that remain a mystery to us despite our close proximity to them. In her able hands “the potato opens its eyes” and the dragonfly stands “well mannered and cautious.” Whether she is musing “What it is to be that crow,” bringing us “the gossip of ants,” or noting that “The sea reads slowly, as old men in libraries / follow the news . . .,” Willard brings extraordinary empathy to every subject she touches, creating fascinating new worlds from the ordinary staples of our daily existence. Finally, she plumbs the ultimate union between the human and natural worlds that she brings into such sharp focus.

Grave

*Last year four men planted you under a stone.
Today I plant the dumpy heart of a narcissus.*

Sharing your bed, it will wake up singing.

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