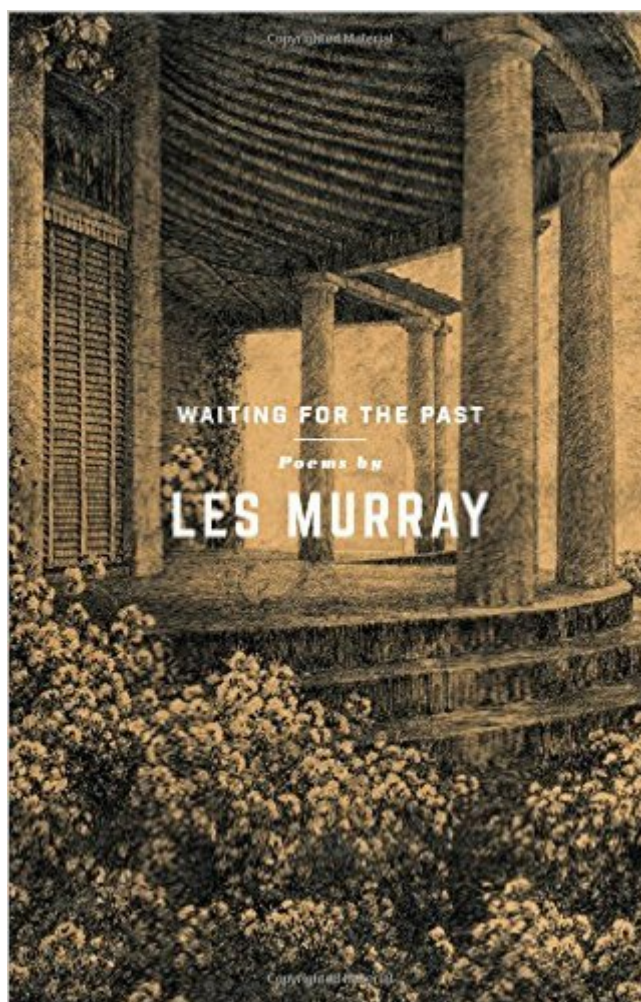


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Waiting For The Past: Poems



Synopsis

A new collection of poems from Les Murray that renews and transforms the contemporary world through language. In *Waiting for the Past*, Les Murray employs his molten sense of language to renew and transform our experience of the world. With quicksilver verse, he conjures his rural past, the life of the poor dairy boy in Australia, as he simultaneously feels the steady tug of aging, of time pulling him back to the present. Here, syntax, sense, and sound combine with such acrobatic grace that his poems render the familiar into the unknown, the unknown into the revelatory. Whether Murray is writing about a boy on a walkabout hiding from grief, a sounding whale â€œspilling salt rain,â€• or leaves that â€œtread on the sky,â€• the great Australian poetâ€™s sense of wonder, his ear for the everyday, his swiftness of thought, are everywhere in these pages. As Derek Walcott said of Murrayâ€™s work, â€œThere is no poetry in the English language now so rooted in its sacredness, so broad-leafed in its pleasures, and yet so intimate and conversational.â€•

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Les Murray dedicates each of his books 'To the Glory of God', a slight tweak on the Jesuit's motto. If I were God, I'd grade this latest offering B minus. Murray's standing isn't in doubt. He has won the T.S. Eliot Prize, the Petrarch Prize and the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry, and many feel his flight to Sweden is long overdue. His poems enjoy a proverbial status in his native Australia, particularly 'The Dream of Wearing Shorts Forever', 'The Tin Wash Dish' and 'The Quality of Sprawl.' Blake Morrison ranked him in the same league as Heaney, Walcott and Brodsky; Brodsky himself said 'Murray is 'quite simply, the one by whom the language lives.' Murray's language is unforgettable. It

needs to be: his eyes are like telescopes. No one else could describe the Taj Mahal thusly: In a precinct of liver stone, high On its dais, the Taj seems bloc hail. Or water gardening: Blueing the blackened water that lâ™m widening with my spade as I lever up water tussocks and chuck them ashore like sopping comets is a sun-point, dazzling heatless acetylene, under tadpoles that swarm wobbling, like a species of flies and buzzing bubbles that speed upward like many winged species. Unwetable green tacos are lotus leaves. Waterlily leaves are notches plaques of the water. When Murray looks at something - an Emu, a firework, a woman's flowing hair - he makes you feel like you've never seen one before. No one who cares about the health of poetry can ignore him and expect to be taken seriously. There are strong similarities with his 2004 collection *Poems the Size of Photographs*, in its lean, often imagist style.

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