

Little Book of Devotions: Poems that Connect Nature, God and Man

by Michael Escoubas

Reviewed by Barbara Robinette

The pale blue glossy cover and the small size of the book invite me to “*look it over.*” Most people don’t make a lot of time to read poetry so who wants a thick book of poetry? This lightweight book says “*Try me. See what you think.*”

The 2 crosses on the front are a sign of Christianity, preparing me for what will be inside. “Circles of Love” poem on the back cover tells me that the author cares about loving God and neighbor. Unlike some people full of hate and confusion, these simple words again prepare me for what is inside.

Open up the book! And there are 4 sections naming the 4 seasons with 8 poems for each season. Very Haiku-ish! I like it! Connotations of each season are given in the Table of Contents and additional connotations are given during the book at the naming of each season. These are pleasing thoughts of hope.

A favorite poem is “Boathouse at Lake’s Edge.” A woman stands alone “*all day*” happy with what is. No need to chase after anything. It’s a refreshing poem showing the joy of less things and voluntary poverty, being less in people’s eyes and finding wealth in Spring’s new leaves.

Opposite that poem is “A Day is Coming.” Many people do not know of the Christian belief in The Resurrection, that we live after we die to this world. This poem rejoices to share that faith.

Another favorite poem is “Country Road at Dusk.” Michael isn’t afraid to admit to his own lack of Christian love and at the same time, he shows his resolve to be a better person. This is, in part, because of the good guidance of his mother, helping him to believe in the presence of God right now, in this spot, on this country road. In that way, she helps me to experience God’s love right now, too.

All of the poems are good to read; they give hope within the beauty of the world and of the lasting love of the unseen God. Each poem takes 1 page and after the poem, a Bible verse relating to the feeling of the poem is also shared. I appreciated also the verses chosen while experiencing Michael’s words of poetry.

“Flames on the Prairie” has a thoughtful question “*are we most alive at the edge of dying?*” speaking of how beautiful Autumn is but only for a short time and relating this

to our upcoming death. This gives me food for thought. We live our days, one by one, but death can happen at any moment so we cannot be too presumptuous about the day of our death.

Each seasonal section has its own artwork. Spring--the Baltimore Oriole, Summer--the blue hydrangea flower, Autumn--sunflowers in a Ball mason jar and Winter--stone and rock in a garden with a few evergreen plants. This is detailed artwork in colored pencil by Mary Ritchie and enhances the feeling of the poems in the book.

Thank you, Michael, for sharing your poetry and Ritchie's artwork in this book.

Very enjoyable!

Barbara Robinette, has published several collections of poetry including, *Sea Leafs by Moon*.