



Approaching the Gate: Poems

Lynette Reini-Grandell

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Winner of the 2015 Northeastern Minnesota Book Award for Poetry

Lynette Reini-Grandell's long-anticipated debut collection of poetry quickens with forward movement, be it in a car that pushes towards the stars—or with a horse that suddenly spooks, leaving the speaker "knocked down, / breathless, / turning to the sight of a thousand-pound horse / rushing the gate / and leaping over my head." Several of the poems probe the experience of her grandparents who emigrated from Finland and settled on a farm in northern Minnesota in the early twentieth century. The urge to move forward is matched with a deep love and reverence for creatures living in their natural world, for the buzz of the city, for unmet ancestors and kindred spirits, and most especially for her transgender husband.

Approaching the Gate

*Peel back the feathers, peel back the fur.
The pale, protective skin--peel that away too.*

*Pull apart anything that covers,
scrape away whatever doesn't fit.*

*Let light stream in at the speed of blood,
slice past cornea, sclera, iris, retina.*

*Anything to fell the green-leaved past
and pave a roadway,*

*anything to get to the inside,
anything to plow this ground under.*

Lynette Reini-Grandell's poetry has received grants from the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Finlandia Foundation. Her work has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize and is part of an art installation in room 5D of the Carlton Arms Hotel in Manhattan. In Minneapolis, she reads regularly with the Bosso Poetry Company, a subsidiary of Bosso Enterprises, theoretically based in Big Lever, Wyoming.

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