ForeWord Reviews
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POETRY

40+ Love
Mi Sook Park Westman
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Two Stars (out of Five)

In the debut collection *40 + Love*, poet Mi Sook Park Westman celebrates the changes swirling through her life, and there are many. Raw from the recent termination of her seventeen-year marriage, she finds herself blessedly in love once more, and explores these two polar opposite states of being—sorrow and bliss—through the written word. There are over one hundred poems in this collection, each one a celebration or reflection of her very fresh emotions.

Park Westman's poems contain a lot of potential. Overall, the joy she feels about a second chance at love and happiness is clearly expressed. She is sincere and heartfelt. Some of the poems in the collection speak to how she finds herself devastated, a single mother with two daughters. In the poem, "When you lose," she faces her grief: "You lost your love and the world stops in front of your heart / You lost your love and your heart needs to be carved out."

The poems are all deeply personal and the majority of them are addressed to Park Westman's new lover, referred to as "M." A chance meeting with M, an Australian man of Italian descent, opens up a whole new and exciting world of possibilities for Park Westman, and she vows to live for three things—health, happiness, and horniness, as explained in the poem "3 Hs." This vow is the culmination of her poetry's main theme: "Love makes life beautiful and wonderful / Love makes a human complete one from the half."

Park Westman is originally from Korea but has spent her adult life working for IKEA in Sweden. Rising from the ashes of her divorce, she has published a self-help book based on her experience, *How to Succeed in Divorcing: A Journey of Self Discovery*. She is also the author of a business book, *Does Culture Matter in Competence Management? Transforming Barriers to Enablers*.

Humor, lust, wonder—these qualities all shine through in the content of Park Westman's poems. It is clear, however, that English is not her first language. On a technical level, there are so many mistakes and errors—missing articles, words used incorrectly or misplaced, wrong prepositions—that even the most forgiving reader will become frustrated.

40+ Love contains personal poems really meant for one reader, M. In a second edition, Park Westman would do well to employ the services of a talented editor to clean up the errors. Without a doubt, this budding poet already has the passion—with a little guidance, she'll hone her craft as well.

Olivia Boler