



A Room of Rain

Gary Fincke

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Hardcore journalism meets the neighborhood gossip in this innovative collection of twelve short stories.

Told secondhand and infused with a storyteller's voice, *A Room of Rain* takes the literary tourist on gripping, tour-bus-style escapades that examine the dark side of life from a safe, somewhat distant standpoint. Award-winning Gary Fincke is at his best in this gritty collection, involving the curious without sickening the sensitive.

Every word is delegated a specific duty in a work that leaves little to the imagination. Tight, immaculate prose provides the details for scenarios that are vivid and realistic. Bringing into play all five senses, Fincke creates the vicarious experiences that connoisseurs of intellectual fiction seek. His sentences are packed with potent adjectives and powerful verbs—a muscular use of language.

These stories span a broad range of events that would typically make the news—coldblooded murder, tragic accidents, and illegal behavior in a variety of situations that call into question morals as well as ethics. Criminal actions are not always a catalyst, but even in these lighter yarns, Fincke focuses on peripheral activities and sideline conversations that may reveal more than an involved emotional rendering of incidents.

In the title piece, “A Room of Rain,” the domestic strife and classic infidelity that tarnish a boy’s perception of his father make him inclined to idolize his mother. Yet this descriptive passage is understated, making a profound statement without excess or drama. “It rained only on us for two hours ... I could stand exactly like my mother had when I first saw her in the rain. I could lift my head up and keep my eyes open and remember how her blouse stuck to her body and showed how beautiful she still was, as if that rain had chosen her to fall on.”

A native of Pennsylvania, Gary Fincke is the prolific author of over twenty-five books and the recipient of numerous awards. He is the Writers Institute director and Charles Degenstein professor of English and creative writing at Susquehanna University.

JULIA ANN CHARPENTIER (Spring 2015)

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