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Clarion Review

Beach Boulevard: and Other Poems
WF Postle
WF Postle, illustrator
Mundane Publications
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Two Stars (out of Five)

The title poem of this collection immerses the reader in the Southern California milieu that the poet knows well. Details include endless miles of highway fast food restaurants cinnamon rolls "strollers and serapes" and crude language. This is sustained for several pages until the reader is surrounded by the atmosphere the poet has created. Six pages in the "I" of the poem picks up a woman in his car and has sex with her breaking the atmosphere he's created as the "I" abruptly moves from insightful observer to just another participant in the seamy SoCal scene.

The other poems here are quite varied. The poet displays a wry sense of humor in "Make Way!" and "A Number of Pills"; he instructs God on the Middle East in "Lost in Translation" and presents the commuting scene in "Same Train Same Seat." On one hand the reader is given a broad spectrum of topics; on the other it's difficult to find the overarching theme beyond SoCal. Yet if the theme is SoCal readers may question the inclusion of poems like "Times Square."

The poems are accessible and understandable but the quality is uneven. "I Can't Wait to See the Dailies" "Pretence" "Viola" and "Spanish Revival" are sustained and fine; others begin strongly but don't finish at the same level. Either they end abruptly ("As We Know It" "Under the Magnolia Tree 2") or leave the reader wanting more depth ("Louisiana Wines" "What I Did"). This unevenness is also true in "Three Dozen Three Liners" some of which come across as afterthoughts while others exhibit great charm and word play.

The book essentially needs more editing. The content needs an objective editorial eye a re-write and a final edit but there are other signs. There are many typos apparently missed because spell-check wouldn't catch them e.g. work for word swap for swamp etc. In the introduction "effect" is used when "affect" is needed and while "Heath Ledger" is referenced in a poem the endnote says "Keith Ledger."

The poet designed his own cover which is artistic and appropriate; however in the

presentation of the text there appear to be periodic font changes. As for word choice the “F” word is used extensively in these poems many of which are blatantly sexual. Sometimes this word choice works; sometimes not. It does however limit the book to an adult audience and it is likely to appeal more to male readers than female ones.

This is the author’s fourth book the others being *99 Cents Worth Dead Serious* and *From My Stoop*. In spite of the editing issues and unevenness in some poems the poet has the ability to convey his environment with strong detail and observation.

Aline Soules