

Man in the Moon: Essays on Fathers and Fatherhood

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Dinty W. Moore, Contributor

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Humor, sincerity, and a variety of experiences reveal the bond between father and kin.

Man in the Moon: Essays on Fathers and Fatherhood is a compilation of work already published in literary journals and publications. Every entry—each exploring the relationship between fathers and children—is equally strong, and picking the best is a fruitless endeavor.

Certainly, Bill Capossere's "Man in the Moon," a touching tale based on a love for astronomy he shared with his father, was chosen as the title essay for good reason. But finding the true capstone of the collection has more to do with the reader's own perspective.

Have you dealt with dementia? Gina Frangello's "The Lion and the Mouse" will make your heart skip with lines like this: "He is on a journey across the white barren land, inside himself, from us. We stand on the periphery and watch him ride away." Death? Donna George Storey's "Thirteen Views of Grief" grabs you by the hand and leads you right back down the path.

Though many of the tales are painful, there's some merriment to go with the melancholy. Dinty W. Moore's "Son of Mr. Green Jeans" is a relatively lighthearted, A-to-Z recap of fatherhood. C, for example, is dedicated to the Japanese carp that protects his babies by sucking them into his mouth.

Editor Stephanie G'Schwind does an admirable job of mixing the emotional intensity of seventeen disparate works. Read cover-to-cover, the essays are arranged in a way that breaks up the most heartbreaking tales by interspersing easier reads between them.

G'Schwind is the editor of *Colorado Review* and director of the Center for Literary Publishing at Colorado State University.

In the introduction, G'Schwind reveals her impetus for the compilation: Her father died when she was twenty-two, the point in life where she and her father were "about to be two adults who might have, over so many more years, come to know each other not as adult and child, but as father and daughter." Now, she notes, "that distance between us [is] forever fixed."

For readers—fathers, sons, and daughters alike—the size of that personal distance of which G'Schwind speaks will impact how *Man in the Moon* is internalized. But whether that gap is a canyon, a fissure, or completely closed, these

seventeen essays as a collective piece will help cement what you know—or will never know—about the intimate relationship between father and child.

RICH REZLER (Fall 2014)

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