Clarion Review

Poetry

Some Holy Weight in the Village Air
Ira Joe Fisher
Athanata Arts
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Five Stars (out of Five)

Where is the village in the valley where astounding beauty can be witnessed in “Day poplar and grass burst blossoming” but could also be the home of a boy whose haunting dreams stir him from sleep: “He listens between heart beats; He listens too paralyzed to pray”? Perhaps it is the village of Annville not far from route seventeen with its Fair Oaks Street Thompson Avenue and the Milks Hotel just down the street from the Methodist Church. Fisher paints for the reader a much larger view of humanity in his poetry book and therefore this village could be almost anywhere. Readers will be able to identify with Fisher’s reminiscent views of how lives can often be contrasted between sheer splendor and bitter disenchantment.

Fisher currently teaches poetry at the University of Connecticut at Stamford and earned a Master of Fine Arts degree from New England College. The poems in *Some Holy Weight in the Village Air* reveal that he is indeed one of today’s most gifted and talented poets. He has a rare ability to piece together words into poems that are both readable and eloquent as in the poem “At the Height of Their Mischief.” He writes: “Starlings mobbed the sky / and looked like laughter. / They flew too fast to follow; / it was good to watch from below / as they burst above the day.”

Occasionally there is brilliant humor intermingled between the poems about the melting mists angry alcoholic fathers tall pines and autumn maples. Poems such as “Forget It” might pleasantly remind the reader of friends or family members who share less than memorable histories. “Mystery” is entertaining verse about Minestrone soup the self-explanatory title of “Age” is humorous as well depending upon your perspective. These amusing poems add a great deal of delightful balance in what is otherwise a thoroughly thought-provoking collection.

Some Holy Weight in the Village Air will appeal to any boy who has ever prowled a creek and any girl who has ever learned every word to a song. It will capture the attention of

anyone interested in reading beautiful and technically magnificent poetry as well as those who enjoy deep and stimulating meaning. The contrasting images Fisher paints for us can be seen almost anywhere. Perhaps outside our own windows rests the small village of Annville no matter where we live.

Brian Douthit