



## The Balloon Containing the Water Containing the Narrative Begins Leaking

**Rich Ives**

What Books Press (Oct 15, 2015)

Softcover \$15.00 (153pp)

978-0-9962276-0-5

Innovative writer Rich Ives has filled this, his newest book, with small, often tiny stories not unlike fables or dreams. Surreal happenings are recorded in spare prose that creates mental images akin to a Dalí painting: a man stares at a camera set up on a tripod in the street, waiting, not noticing that the camera is not facing him and that there is no one there to trigger the shutter; a photographer moves a photo of a dead man into the light and photographs it while sounds of a neighbor pounding a nail into the wall and the rumbling of a refrigerator pierce the silence; a man declares that he has nothing to live for, and another responds, "Don't be maudlin. You have just as much to live for now as you've ever had." "That's the problem," the first man replies. "Now I know how little it's always been."

Stunningly multisensory and intense, Ives' introspective and intimate portraits of moments or days in the lives of offbeat, eccentric people are written in strong, lucid prose that infuses everything, even the landscape, with emotion. "This land feeds its gradual loss into the cold bright water," he writes in "Near Torshavn, Farøe Islands." "Summer leaves as though it were one of us, awash with emotion. The long darkness waits, despair holding off the coast in quiet boats."

Ives, also an artist and musician, has had his work published in eleven different countries and has received several prestigious grants and awards for his work in poetry, fiction, editing, publishing, translation, and photography.

KRISTINE MORRIS (Winter 2016)

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