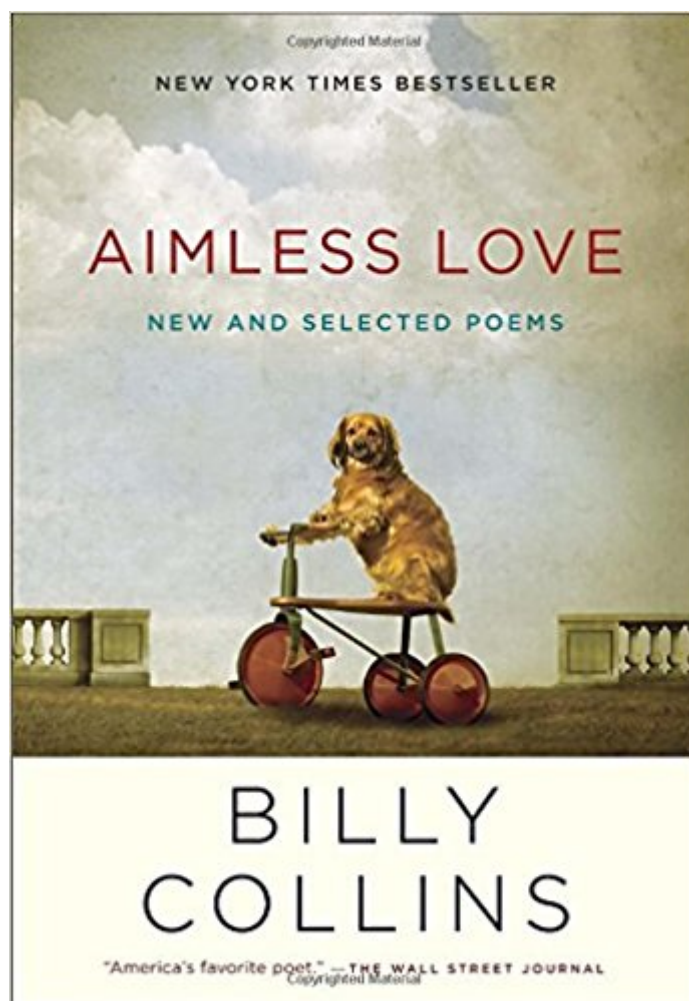


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Aimless Love: New And Selected Poems



Synopsis

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER—“America’s favorite poet.”—The Wall Street Journal From the two-term Poet Laureate of the United States Billy Collins comes his first volume of new and selected poems in twelve years. *Aimless Love* combines fifty new poems with generous selections from his four most recent books—*Nine Horses*, *The Trouble with Poetry*, *Ballistics*, and *Horoscopes for the Dead*. Collins’s unmistakable voice, which brings together plain speech with imaginative surprise, is clearly heard on every page, reminding us how he has managed to enrich the tapestry of contemporary poetry and greatly expand its audience. His work is featured in top literary magazines such as *The New Yorker*, *Poetry*, and *The Atlantic*, and he sells out reading venues all across the country. Appearing regularly in *The Best American Poetry* series, his poems appeal to readers and live audiences far and wide and have been translated into more than a dozen languages. By turns playful, ironic, and serious, Collins’s poetry captures the nuances of everyday life while leading the reader into zones of inspired wonder. In the poet’s own words, he hopes that his poems “begin in Kansas and end in Oz.” Touching on the themes of love, loss, joy, and poetry itself, these poems showcase the best work of this “poet of plenitude, irony, and Augustan grace” (*The New Yorker*). Envoy—Go, little book, out of this house and into the world, carriage made of paper rolling toward town bearing a single passenger beyond the reach of this jittery pen and far from the desk and the nosy gooseneck lamp. It is time to decamp, put on a jacket and venture outside, time to be regarded by other eyes, bound to be held in foreign hands. So off you go, infants of the brain, with a wave and some bits of fatherly advice: stay out as late as you like, don’t bother to call or write, and talk to as many strangers as you can. Praise for *Aimless Love*—“[Billy Collins] is able, with precious few words, to make me cry. Or laugh out loud. He is a remarkable artist. To have such power in such an abbreviated form is deeply inspiring.”—J. J. Abrams, *The New York Times Book Review*—“His work is poignant, straightforward, usually funny and imaginative, also nuanced and surprising. It bears repeated reading and reading aloud.”—*The Plain Dealer*—“Collins has earned almost rock-star status. . . . He knows how to write layered, subtly witty poems that anyone can understand and appreciate—even those who don’t normally like poetry. . . . The Collins in these pages is distinctive, evocative, and knows how to make the genre fresh and relevant.”—*The Christian Science Monitor*—“Collins’s new poems contain everything you’ve come to expect from a Billy Collins poem. They stand solidly on even ground, chiseled and unbreakable. Their phrasing is elegant, the humor is alive, and the

speaker continues to stroll at his own pace through the plainness of American life. *The Daily Beast* “[Collins’s] poetry presents simple observations, which create a shared experience between Collins and his readers, while further revealing how he takes life’s everyday humdrum experiences and makes them vibrant. *The Times Leader* From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

Collins, or the speaker in his poems, watches himself with helpless bemusement as he lives “a life of continual self-expression, / jotting down little things. Obsessive noticing gets him into all sorts of trouble, as recounted so wryly, so tenderly in “Aimless Love,” the poem that gives this vital and shrewdly provocative volume its title and in which the speaker records his sequential ardor for a wren, a mouse, and a bar of soap. In selections from his four most recent collections, from *Nine Horses* (2002) to *Horoscopes for the Dead* (2011), and 51 glimmering new poems, former poet laureate and reader favorite Collins, the maestro of the running-brook line and the clever pivot, celebrates the resonance and absurdity of what might be called the poet’s attention-surfeit disorder. He nimbly mixes the timeless—the sun, loneliness—with the fidgety, digital now. Some poems are funny from the opening gambit to the closing flourish. But Collins’s droll wit is often a diversionary tactic, so that when he strikes you with the hard edge of his darker visions, you reel.

--Donna Seaman --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

"America's favorite poet." •The Wall Street Journal "[Billy Collins] is able, with precious few words, to make me cry. Or laugh out loud. He is a remarkable artist. To have such power in such an abbreviated form is deeply inspiring." •J. J. Abrams, The New York Times Book Review "His work is poignant, straightforward, usually funny and imaginative, also nuanced and surprising. It bears repeated reading and reading aloud." •The Plain Dealer "Collins has earned almost rock-star status. . . He knows how to write layered, subtly witty poems that anyone can understand and appreciate—even those who don't normally like poetry. . . . The Collins in these pages is distinctive, evocative, and knows how to make the genre fresh and relevant." •The Christian Science Monitor "Collins's new poems contain everything you've come to expect from a Billy Collins poem. They stand solidly on even ground, chiseled and unbreakable. Their phrasing is elegant, the humor is alive, and the speaker continues to stroll at his own pace through the plainness of American life." •The Daily Beast "[Collins's] poetry presents simple observations, which create a shared experience between Collins and his readers, while further revealing how he takes life's everyday humdrum experiences and makes them vibrant." •The Times Leader "Former poet laureate and reader favorite Collins, the maestro of the running-brook line and the clever pivot, celebrates the resonance and absurdity of what might be called the poet's attention-surfeit disorder. . . . But Collins's droll wit is often a diversionary tactic, so that when he strikes you with the hard edge of his darker visions, you reel." •Booklist "A stellar jumping-off point . . . a joyride through all layers of his approach from 2002 to the present, which should not only please his current fans, but inspire many others to dive into Mr. Collins's work, headfirst." •The Rumpus From the Hardcover edition.

Billy Collins has a sense of humor that is ALWAYS in play. So many of his poems end with an unexpected twist or turn. And yet each is welcome and one never has the sense of "there's the hook". It always seems original and fresh. Not that this is a "laugh book". Collins' work can be moving as well as light. But how can you not love a poem like "Hangover"? Hangover! If I were crowned emperor this morning, every child who is playing Marco Polo in the swimming pool of this motel, shouting the name Marco Polo back and forth Marco Polo Marco Polo would be required to read a biography of Marco Polo—a long one with fine print—as well as a history of China and of

Venice, the birthplace of the venerated explorer Marco Polo Marco Polo after which each child would be quizzed by me then executed by drowning regardless how much they managed to retain about the glorious life and times of Marco Polo Marco Polo

Billy Collins poems cover a wide range of subject matter they're thought provoking & beautiful. I find myself frequently revisiting this book whether curled up on the couch or needing a quiet pick me up at work on a stressful day. It's a big book of quiet comfort I highly recommend

I am a poetry person and a fan of Billy Collins, relishing his droll humor and ability to nail human foibles and relationships. I own most of his books and attend his readings. What is high praise is that my husband--a non-poetry person--also read and relished this book.

My favorite "modern" poet (as distinct from those I studied in English Lit classes at college). Simply love dipping in, reading, relishing the thoughts and ideas and appreciation that come up. Love that he writes about the ordinariness of life, often, in a contemplative, whimsical way. Takes the obvious and goes to the realm of beyond the obvious, so one looks at something with new eyes. Have heard him reading several times on NPR. This adds to the experience as I hear him reading in my head.

I don't usually buy books of poetry, but this was recommended by my book club. Was I ever pleasantly surprised?! The poems are generally short and mostly deal with everyday occurrences. I was asked to choose a favorite poem, but that was impossible. I had too many favorites. The poems are both funny and thoughtful. Buy this book!

I loved Picnic, Lighting but this one not so much. His cleverness seems stale and uninspired.

As usual Billy hits it right on. I love his poetry and really love hearing him read it thanks to NPR.

Enjoyable read of light poetry with much humor and humanness.

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