



Nodin Press

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Now I Live Among Old Trees

poems

Norita Dittberner-Jax

In this, her sixth collection of poems, Norita Dittberner-Jax writes of coming to grips with her beloved husband's last years with ALS and her own diagnosis of cancer. One dies and one lives. In the aftermath, an unfamiliar landscape of solitude. She addresses her absent spouse in many of the poems, talking directly to him, remembering a detail of gardening or table-setting, each quotidian experience a sorrow, but also a courageous sense of affirmation.

*How to get used to the hush, enter it –
not an absence,
but what I'm coming to.*

Starting a new life, the poet moves back to her native Saint Paul and finds comfort and joy in the presence of old trees and the liveliness of the city. She remembers the rich life she's lived, her love of art, childhood memories, the classroom. An atmosphere of calm and lively humor accompanies these deceptively simple poems, as if they were hymns of praise. Poet Jim Moore writes that "these poems, beautifully crafted and written in a voice that one instinctively trusts, will stand guard over the poet's readers in the same way her old trees shelter and protect her."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Norita Dittberner-Jax grew up in the Frogtown neighborhood of Saint Paul, amid a lively mix of German, Irish, and Polish neighbors. She studied literature and education at Saint Catherine's University, taught high school English for many years, and also taught for COMPAS. Norita won the Midwest Book Award in poetry in 2018 for *Crossing the Waters* (Nodin Press). Her work has been recognized by the Minnesota State Arts Board, the Jerome Foundation, the Loft Mentor Program and the National Endowment for the Humanities. *Now I Live Among Old Trees* is her sixth collection of poetry.

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