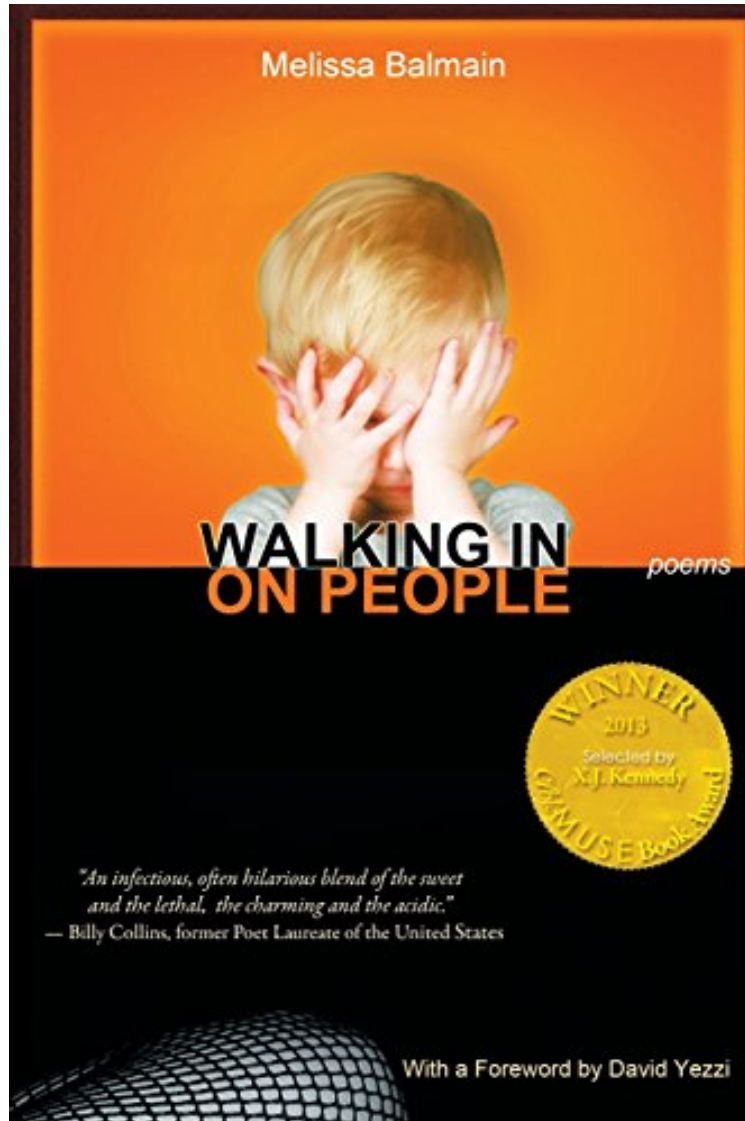


(Get free) Walking in on People (Able Muse Book Award for Poetry)

Walking in on People (Able Muse Book Award for Poetry)

Melissa Balmain

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Melissa Balmain : Walking in on People (Able Muse Book Award for Poetry) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Walking in on People (Able Muse Book Award for Poetry):

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. High Fives and Fist BumpsBy Jaime ReyesI pre-ordered Walking in on People months ago. I've been waiting for it impatiently. Now that its attractive orange and black paperback has arrived, I haven't felt an iota of buyer's remorse. On the contrary, I'm as delighted as I guessed I would be with Melissa

Balmain. Over the years I've read several of her verses in *Light Quarterly*--now simply known as *Light*--which she's been editing since the death of its brilliant founding editor John Mella in 2012. Her debut book collects 56 poems funny and resonant enough to establish her as one of the very best humorists since such stalwarts as Ogden Nash and Richard Armour, not to mention Dorothy Parker, Wendy Cope, and that irrepressible bard of light versifiers X. J. Kennedy. But don't take my word for it. Here's a Balmain 12-liner: Bird in the Hand It doesn't caw or hunt or fly. It can't peck anybody's eye or even grow a single lousy feather. One-clawed, no match for any tom, it's stranded on a leafless palm, regardless of the season, time or weather. Yet what's the bird that, all alone, sticks up for you when gibes have flown and you don't care to verbalize or linger; when someone's mocked you to your face or cut you off or swiped your space--what bird? The one that moonlights as a finger. Move over, Lord Byron and Alexander Pope: *Walking in on People* is a pleasant alternative to a super tanker-load of "serious poetry" that fills the pages of journals too respectable to mention here. For anyone who takes Marianne Moore's canonical line about poetry at face value--"I, too, dislike it"--Balmain is someone to LOL with. What's not to like about her satiric doozies about marriage, childbearing, hypochondria? She can handle a sonnet, a villanelle or a triolet as masterfully as she deploys iambs and anapests. She's a jill-of-all poems except those that are boring. If Phyllis McGinley won a Pulitzer Prize for her light verse collection *Times Three*, Balmain deserves the accolades of poets like Billy Collins and David Yezzi, let alone Kennedy, who selected *Walking in on People* as winner of the 2013 Able Muse Book Award. Balmain has been on the scene for quite a while now, or I could say, with Whitman, that I greet her at the beginning of a great career. High fives and fist bumps to Melissa Balmain. Be the first one to buy her first book! 8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Funny, warm and brilliant! By sandishelton Melissa Balmain writes a very clever and smart column for *Success* magazine, but her true comic sense comes through in this delightful collection of poems. Honestly, they will make you laugh out loud. But make no mistake. These poems are not only hilarious; they are wise and metrically perfect, and Melissa Balmain is a genius. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Must read! By Airymom I thoroughly enjoyed this volume of poetry. Rather than repeat what earlier reviewers wrote, I will simply agree that the poems are fun, poignant, well written and resonate with me. My favorite, as a social worker with over 30 years working in child protective services (child abuse and neglect) is "Lament". Call it gallows humor, it's hilarious.

In Melissa Balmain's *Walking in on People*, the serious is lightened with a generous serving of wit and humor, and the lighthearted is enriched with abundant wisdom. She shows us how poetry can be fun yet grounded in everyday challenges and triumphs, with subjects ranging from the current and hip (Facebook posts, online dating, layoffs, retail therapy, cell-phone apps, trans fat), to the traditional and time-tested (marriage, child-rearing, love, death). Through it all, her craft is masterful, with a formal dexterity deployed with precision in a showcase of forms such as the villanelle, ballad, triolet, nonce, and the sonnet. It is little wonder then that *Walking in on People* is the winner of the 2013 Able Muse Book Award, as selected by the final judge, X.J. Kennedy. This is a collection that will not only entertain thoroughly, but also enlighten and reward the reader. Winner of the 2013 Able Muse Book Award PRAISE FOR WALKING IN ON PEOPLE: "An infectious, often hilarious blend of the sweet and the lethal, the charming and the acidic." ~Billy Collins, former United States Poet Laureate "Poetry these days is rarely so entertaining, so beautifully crafted, so sharp of eye, yet so wise and warm of heart." ~X.J. Kennedy, final judge, Able Muse Book Award

"With her first full-length collection, *Walking in on People* (Able Muse), Melissa Balmain stakes her claim to membership among our best writers of light verse. Light verse is a misleading term. Most of Balmain's poems are not light in the sense of frivolous or superficial. They often raise serious topics, but they do so with a wonderful sense of humor. ... If you are wanting to convert someone who thinks reading poetry is only a slight improvement over visiting the dentist, get him or her this book." - *Expansive Poetry Online* "Balmain's poetry could be characterized as equal parts Dorothy Parker, Alexander Pope and Tom Lehrer." - *Quadrupheme* From the Back Cover *Walking in on People* grabbed me with its very title, and it never let go. Poetry these days is rarely so entertaining, so beautifully crafted, so sharp of eye, yet so wise and warm of heart. Melissa Balmain keenly perceives faults in people and in our popular culture, with piercing wit but never bitterness. Don't miss the wonderful "Lament," on what it takes to write a best seller, or "The Marital Bed," a love poem with naturalistic detail. She really commands her art. Indeed, I think any poet who rhymes lobsters and Jersey mobsters deserves to have an equestrian statue of herself erected in Bangor or Newark or both. X.J. Kennedy (final judge, 2013 Able Muse Book Award) Melissa Balmain's poems add to the rhythmic bounce of light verse a darker, more cutting humor. The result is an infectious, often hilarious blend of the sweet and the lethal, the charming and the acidic. Billy Collins So many of the poems in Melissa Balmain's triumphant debut lodge themselves in that Frostian zone where they are hard to get rid of. They recur in the mind in moments of hilarity and pathos, of exaltation and mortification, and they never let us go. David Yezzi (from the foreword) Accessible and entertaining poetry doesn't often prevail over the grim personal memoir in poetry contests, but this time the judges were smart. They went for Melissa Balmain's stylish and always metrically perfect wit. You can relate to this poetry if you have ever: longed to save the restaurant lobsters from their fate, lost your lover to his electronic

devices, faced the fact that babies are ugly and toddlers suppress your genius, or (of course) walked in on people in all the wrong places. With diverse forms, inventive rhymes, the right word always chosen and a sense of humor always in evidence you really have no excuse not to buy this book. Gail White About the AuthorMelissa Balmain is a humorist, journalist, and teacher, and the editor of *Light*. Her poems have been published in the anthologies *The Iron Book of New Humorous Verse* and *Killer Verse*, and in *American Arts Quarterly*, *Lighten Up Online*, *Measure*, *Mezzo Cammin*, *The Spectator* (UK), *The Washington Post*, and elsewhere. Her prose has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *McSweeney's*, *Details*, and many other magazines and newspapers. She is a columnist for *Success* magazine and the author of a memoir, *Just Us: Adventures of a Mother and Daughter* (Faber and Faber). Balmain has won national journalism honors and been a finalist for the Donald Justice Poetry Prize, the Howard Nemerov Sonnet Award, and the X.J. Kennedy Parody Award. She teaches at the University of Rochester and lives nearby with her husband and two children. *Walking in on People*, the winner of the 2013 Able Muse Book Award, is her first full-length poetry collection.