

Mike Madill's debut collection of poetry traverses the experiences and emotions that make us human, fragile, and humane: childhood wonder and joy, uncertainty, self-doubt, loss, love, friendship, grief, and ultimately the unrelenting hope that keeps us all moving forward. This includes the poet's hope that the words will come and the very human hope that the path will show itself. Madill's poems are grounded in the materiality of everyday life, the very "stuff" that makes us human. The language is often stark and gritty and reveals the terrible beauty of time. Time we are granted with those we love, and the effects of time as it ravages the human body and the human spirit, seen in striking metaphors: "bleary as week old butter," "faded to a malignant green," and "days darken sooner, sucked November-bare." Echoes of past poetic giants – Ginsberg, Eliot, Neruda – can be heard, yet Madill's is also a unique voice that captures the struggles of a disillusioned Generation X. Amid the existential struggle, though, there emerges a refreshing wit that reminds us to laugh at the absurdities of existence and to embrace "the better part of some time".

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