



Alibi School

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Whether dissecting his family of origin (“twentynothing,” “1977,” “Where the Self Divides”) or penning unusual love poems (“Following Her to Sleep,” “Trust,”) McDaniel’s unparalleled ability to wield a mighty metaphor is revealed in every poem. This book contains the poem “Grace”, which the Poetry Society of America chose for their Poetry in Motion series to entertain public transit passengers in major metropolitan areas.

Alibi School Details

Date : Published May 1st 1995 by Manic D Press, Inc.

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Author : Jeffrey McDaniel

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From Reader Review Alibi School for online ebook

Ariadne says

This is McDaniel's first book of poetry, and it sizzles. I like his later work more, but there is a rawness here that is very intriguing. His metaphors are striking and unusual, and his language crisp. I especially enjoyed his poems about his family and youth - subjects that can easily be tired are made personal and distinct.

Book #23 for 2013

Jess says

Mathematicians still don't understand the ball our hands made or how your electrocuted grandmother made it possible for you to light my cigarettes with your eyes. *sigh* Does it get better than that?

Aberjhani says

jeffrey mcdaniel is one of the few modern poets who shine as brilliantly on the page as he does on the stage. the appearance of his work in such publications as best american poetry and ploughshares attest to the former observation while live performances around the world bear witness to the latter. his highly original, deeply intimate, and profoundly creative work is not to be missed.[return][return]by aberjhani[return]author of "i made my boy out of poetry"[return]and "encyclopedia of the harlem renaissance"

Molly says

If you see me between flights, clutching a banister, / don't stare. I'm just a shadow of the mood / swinging inside you. (25)

Let this sentence / be the arm I can't wrap around here (38)

I re-arrange all the stars until she believes me (38)

You rendered me crazy, like the footprints / of a husband chasing his wife / with a garage door opener through the snow. (40)

When I split, pain spread through the rumor / of my body like truth. (40)

Since father banned television the sons stare / at the marriage dangling from the ceiling.

Kerrie says

Very underrated poet.

Donald Armfield says

The library only have me a week for this loan. Not accepting it as a challenge but to ease my eagerness to read more of this man's work. His poetry is classic humor. Get yours. The entire opening (Part 1) is very funny.

Other Favorites:

- Where The Self Divides
 - Grandfather
 - Dead Twin
 - Kill The Carrier
-

Victor says

One of the first great books of poetry to emerge from the body of poets that constitute slam, and one that's going to echo through the ages.

Alex L. says

Things I have read which I have since bought and re-read, furtively, before and after the science fiction. Poetry about raw nerves and alcohol sluiced over them.

Kasandra says

Quirky, funny, unsettling, often surreal, honest, touching, and decidedly not boring, this first book by McDaniel, a former slam poet, surprised me by being more inventive than I'd expected, as well as more oblique. While much spoken-word poetry tends toward the general or the "grabbing by the throat" with emotion while not necessarily being very well-written, these poems are clearly well thought out and are balanced on the page as well as in the mouth. In addition, the imagery McDaniel uses is original and thought-provoking, while not losing a sense of emotion and humanity. He straddles the line between intellectual and conversational in his poetry, leaving room for the reader to ponder and question, but also striking emotional chords, so that his work didn't leave me feeling empty (as so much overly intellectual/academic work can do) or, on the other hand, feeling deliberately emotionally trampled and shouted at (like so much slam poetry can do).

Though not many of these poems left me saying "wow" or insisting that others read them (often they felt like well-put-together parts, many of which I enjoyed and smiled at or flinched from, but which often didn't add up to more than the sum of those parts.... this is why I give it 3 stars instead of 4) a number of them did

demand to be re-read, and the collection as a whole is solid. Topics range from self-loathing to addiction to family losses and dysfunction to depression to love and longing to friendship; a little of everything.

There are only 38 poems in this volume, so it really feels like more of a chapbook; it's a bit misleading for it to be granted book status, being so slim. I felt that having the poems divided into 4 sections seemed unnecessary (though I did understand the slight categories of the sections), making the book bulkier than it otherwise would have been.

I'll definitely be seeking out more of McDaniel's work, since this was his debut and he's come out with 3 more books since then.

My favorites:

Modern Day Sisyphus

D

Exile

Last Night

1977

Dead Twin
