



In Confidence

Poems by

Jim Tilley

In Confidence is Jim Tilley's first book of poems, ranging from lyric to narrative in form. About half of the 60 poems are open-form sonnets, most of which fit a broad theme of personal and societal "dislocation." The collection covers a variety of subjects, from father-son and husband-wife relationships to issues of politics, the economy, and the environment. Stephen Dobyns cautions readers to look beyond the apparent calmness and elegance of the poems to the dangers that lurk beneath the surface. Many of the stories have unhappy endings. Several of the poems are presented in pairs with the same underlying setting or situation but markedly different development, exhibiting a kind of "quantum" picture with both states existing at the same time, not surprising since the poet was formerly a physicist. Billy Collins claims that Jim Tilley wins readers' confidence by keeping a steady hand on the poem while maintaining a steady gaze at the world. This is a book of poems in which readers will find bits and pieces of their own lives.

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Released

Biographical note:

In Confidence (Red Hen Press, 2011) is **Jim Tilley's** first book of poetry. He earned a doctorate in Physics from Harvard University and retired ten years ago after a 25-year career in insurance and investment banking. His poems have been published in several top literary journals and magazines. He has won the Sycamore Review's Wabash Prize for Poetry and the New England Poetry Club's Firman Houghton Award. Four of his poems have been nominated for a Pushcart Prize.

Praise for *In Confidence*:

"Jim Tilley is a bracing and quietly confident writer, able to consistently surprise us, whether in missives from domestic life, topical poems, or poems which quirkily address what he calls "the big questions." These are wry, bittersweet, and unobtrusively instructive poems in the tradition of Wilbur, Schuyler, and Dunn, and they are very much worth reading."

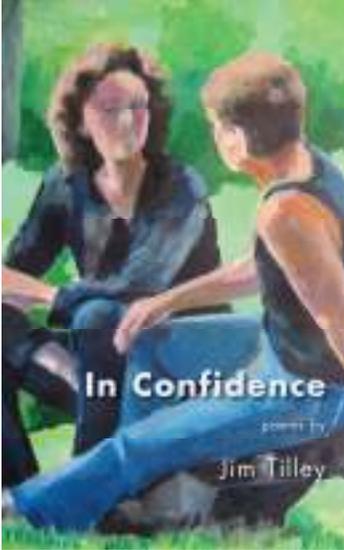
—David Wojahn, author of six collections of poetry

"At first glance Jim Tilley's *In Confidence* seems to consist of calm, graceful poems of upper middle class domesticity, but turkey vultures wait in the yard and many stories have unhappy endings. Instead the poems are about trying to maintain 'this fragile equilibrium' like a tightrope walker tip-toeing above a lion's den. One sees the quiet elegance is all that keeps one from shouting, 'Watch out!' These are finely crafted poems in which readers will find bits and pieces of their own lives."

—Stephen Dobyns



More Praise for *In Confidence*



“It is rare to encounter a first book of poems as clear-eyed and accomplished as Jim Tilley’s *In Confidence*. The press of everyday experience informs these deceptively calm poems, rippling with disturbing undercurrents. Whether imagining the incursion of windmills in Nantucket Sound (Vase of Tall White Stalks), or seeing “something fractal in forsythia” (In Spring, Mathematics Are Yellow), Tilley’s imagination is fluent and unforced, his eye fresh to the natural world that he searchingly inhabits. At his best, Tilley writes about the ordinary moments in a life in an extraordinary way.”

—Elizabeth Spires, author of *The Wave-Maker*

“Jim Tilley does confide in his readers here as he explores a refreshing variety of subjects—everything from the complexity of father-son and husband-wife relations to the more solvable problems of dark matter and the origins of the cosmos. But what wins our confidence is not his range but his steady hand on the poem and his steady gaze at the world.”

—Billy Collins, former U.S. Poet Laureate

From “Half-Finished Bridge”

No important work to do today, I think,
as I lie in the hammock one last time
before storing it for winter,
just a few chores around the yard—
deck chairs to be stacked and stashed away
and the lawn raked despite the pears
and oaks hanging on to their green.

Stamped on the pencil I’m using,
first snow falling on the half-finished bridge,
now as in Bashō’s time,
the halfway done possibly a road
to nowhere, like the wars we shouldn’t start
and the marriages we can’t finish.
But he must’ve meant that I find myself





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