



News from

Red Hen Press

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The Owning Stone

Poems by

Jim Peterson

What do you do when you can't throw away the stone that contains your dead father's possessive spirit? When a 38 caliber handgun comes knocking on your midnight door? When the woman you desire inhabits an ordinary world so alien to yours that you can only look at her when she's asleep? When all of the women of your town—mothers, daughters, sisters, grandmothers—run away and leave you alone with the other men? When the very best thing in your life is throwing a ball for your worshipful dog? When two young men wearing slim black ties show up at your door pushing bicycles and want nothing less than your soul? These provocative narrative poems—what Peterson prefers to call “situation poems”—attempt to provide answers to these and to many other such questions. With surprising yet apt metaphors and images, with language tightened to the point of breaking, the poems of this new edition of *The Owning Stone* dramatize the situations that capture and hold us, and the potential paths of escape and transcendence that can free us.

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104 pages

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Biographical note:

Jim Peterson's recent poetry collections are *The Owning Stone* (Red Hen Press 2000, 2011) and *The Bob and Weave* (Red Hen 2006). His new chapbook, *The Resolution of Eve* (Finishing Line Press 2011), is based on the last engravings of Goya. His poems have appeared in such journals as *Poetry*, *Georgia Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, and *Shenandoah*. His novel, *Paper Crown*, was published by Red Hen in 2005. His poems have won an Academy of American Poets award, the 1990 Palmetto Award for the best book of poems by a South Carolinian, the 1999 Benjamin Saltman Award, and a 2003 Poetry Fellowship from the Virginia Council on the Arts. He is on the faculty of the University of Nebraska Low-Residency MFA Program in Creative Writing and is Coordinator of Creative Writing/Writer in Residence at Randolph College in Lynchburg, Virginia where he lives with his wife Harriet and their beloved Welsh Corgis, Dylan Thomas and Mama Kilya.

Praise for *The Owning Stone*:

My favorite poems here include the title poem about a talisman stone that emblemizes the omnipresence of past time, "Something Old," "Someone's Father," the bitterly ironic "Fish to Fry," "Trucks and All," "Something," "Paid Vacation," the series of portraits called "Not Talking," and, most of all, "Let Me Find It." This latter poem is a prayer for inspiration, an invocation to the Muse, and such poems are traditionally placed at the beginnings of collections. That this poet places it last in the book underscores a steady modesty that runs all through Jim Peterson's generous but darkly tinged work.

—Fred Chappell