



News from

Red Hen Press

P.O. Box 40820 Pasadena, CA 91114 (626) 356-4760 fax: (626) 356-9974 redhen.org

Room Service

Poems, Meditations, Outcries & Remarks by

Ron Carlson

How did one of America's most gifted fabulists come to write a collection of poetry? For thirty years, Ron Carlson has joked about writing one poem a year, and to look for his book of them in 2012. The joke came true: *Room Service: Poems, Meditations, Outcries & Remarks* is a genre-bending collection of traditional verse, prose poetry, microfiction, and—why not?—a play or two, dancing easily from the lyrical to the surreal to the comical, capturing the long sweep of life's simple necessities and small triumphs. Brimming with Carlson's signature good humor, these pieces were written over many years in many places, and are unified, as befits a first book of poetry, by hope. *Room Service* reminds us why poetry is necessary, and will leave you wondering what took him so long.

Room Service

Poems by Ron Carlson

ISBN: 978-1-59709-233-3

6.5 x 9; Tradepaper

96 pages

Tentative Price: US \$17.95

Scheduled Release: March 1, 2012

Biographical note:

Ron Carlson is the author of eight books of fiction, most recently *The Signal*. His short stories have appeared in journals such as *Esquire*, *Harpers*, *The New Yorker*, as well as *The Best American Short Stories*, *The O. Henry Prize Series*, *The Pushcart Prize Anthology*, *The Norton Anthology of Short Fiction*, and other anthologies. He has received a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in Fiction and a National Society of Arts and Letters Literature Award. His book on writing, *Ron Carlson Writes a Story*, is widely taught. He is director of the Graduate Program in Fiction at the University of California, Irvine.

Praise for Ron Carlson:

"... after 10 books of fiction in 35 years [Carlson] will soon make his debut as a poet whose reach successfully achieves a range of voice, tone, and playful distinction."

—*Publishers Weekly*

"[Ron Carlson] writes like Hemingway without the misogyny and self-parody... Carlson never drops an extra word or a false phrase."

—*The Washington Post*

"Carlson writes about the natural world with convincing authority...with Ron Carlson, you really are in expert hands."

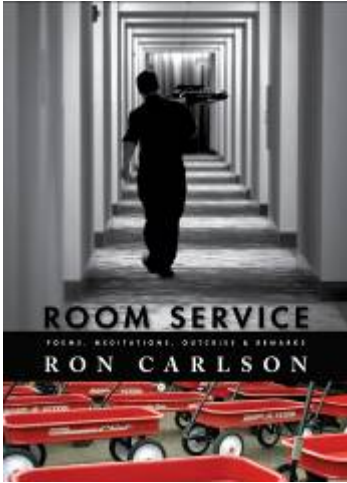
—*The New York Times Book Review*



“Carlson’s focus is transporting, absorbing. It shakes you from stupor, strips you down. He understands that most of us live in a world of enervating crap, whether in the cliffs of Idaho or the canyons of the city.”

—*Esquire*

More Praise for Ron Carlson:



“Carlson transforms the comic junkpile of America’s waning prosperity into a livable, if harsh, landscape.”

—*The Chicago Tribune*

“Carlson’s a romantic—even when he’s writing about failings, folly and violence.”

—*The Los Angeles Times*

“Carlson captures the ordinary occurrences that define our lives.”

—*Publishers Weekly*

“The poems and prose pieces are thoughtful, witty, sad and hopeful--rarely angry or mad. They reveal Carlson as a humble writer you can enjoy over and over.”

—*Shelf Awareness*

Poetry’s Debt to Invention

Oh god what shall we put in this poem?
I know, a house; there’s the bedroom
and we need the kitchen about here.
Let’s put the guy in there leaning
against the counter smoking a cigarette.
People still smoke.
Now what’s he thinking about?
Love? World War III? His father?
It gets tough about here.
His career? Fear? Why he seemed
To be twenty yesterday?
We’re about as far as we can go
in this poem. He nears the end of
his cigarette; we don’t even have
an ashtray. And what’s he thinking?
What else does poetry require?
Oh, the kitchen window, of course,
and outside, oh my god, it’s the ocean
breaking on the beach. We nearly forgot
the ocean.

—from *Room Service*





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