



Vanishing Point

POETRY BY

William Trowbridge

The Seventh collection of poetry by seriocomic master William Trowbridge, “One of America’s best and wittiest poets.”

Vanishing Point concerns memory, cognition, history, and morality as experienced through the process of aging and as seen largely through a seriocomic lens. The range is wide, from arrestingly dark to downright hilarious—sometimes both at once—and all stages in-between. The poet Jim Daniels has said about this book, “With profound wit and humility, with a purity and clarity of language that defines our best poetry, [Trowbridge] takes us on a wild ride and gives us our money’s worth.” The last section contains poems from Trowbridge’s graphic chapbook *Oldguy: Superhero*, with several new poems added to that series.

ADVANCE PRAISE

“William Trowbridge has long been one of my favorite poets writing in America. His new book *Vanishing Point* shows me again just how much I have hoped to learn from him. The poems are concise, wry, drolly absurd at times, at other times cheerily self-deprecating (as in the equally delightful and thoughtful “Old Guy” sequence). But the enormous lyric heart beating in this book never wavers, and the portrait of a father home from war is deeply moving, truthful, and occasionally hair-raising. Trowbridge’s poems have a sneaky ease about them, something that only comes with a long and careful mastery of craft. This is a terrific book. You should buy it.”

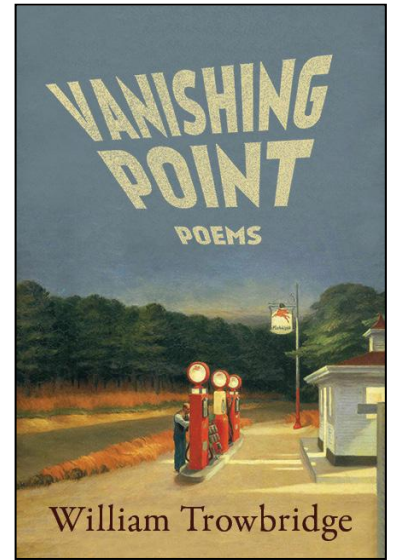
—Erin Belieu, author of *Black Box*

“William Trowbridge has built a very impressive body of work over the years, and *Vanishing Point* further establishes him as one of the important voices in American poetry today. With profound wit and humility, with a purity and clarity of language that defines our best poetry, he takes us on a wild ride and gives us our money’s worth.”

—Jim Daniels, author of *Birth Marks* and *Show and Tell*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The former Poet Laureate of Missouri (2012–2016), William Trowbridge holds a BA in Philosophy and an MA in English from the University of Missouri-Columbia and a PhD in English from Vanderbilt University. His poetry publications include six full poetry collections and four chapbooks and his work has appeared in more than thirty-five anthologies and textbooks, as well as in such periodicals as *Poetry*, the *Gettysburg Review*, *EPOCH*, and *New Letters*. His awards include an Academy of American Poets Prize, a Pushcart Prize, a Bread Loaf Writers’ Conference scholarship, a Camber Press Poetry Chapbook Award. Living now in the Kansas City area, he teaches at the University of Nebraska Low-Residency MFA in Writing Program. Learn more at: williamtrowbridge.net.



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MORE PRAISE FOR *VANISHING POINT*

“On one level, the poems in William Trowbridge’s *Vanishing Point* map a life, through memory, of a keenly observant narrator—a narrator who recalls the complexities of a childhood lived among the wreckage of post-WWII America and an adulthood in the eddies and revolutions that followed (concluding with a wild sequence about the superheroic Oldguy). But Trowbridge’s work goes much deeper than personal memory or fantastical inventiveness. Here, enormous historical forces are always at work in the background, the specters of violence and history—familial, military, social, genocidal—haunting these deft poems. Complex and despairing, sharp and satiric, *Vanishing Point* is a deeply moving book, one I’ll return to with great pleasure.”

—Kevin Prufer, author of *In a Beautiful Country*

“Distinguished poet William Trowbridge is one of a kind. He thinks far outside the box. His poems probe deeply while entertaining. He will sometimes tread where no one has trod before. He can do scathing sarcasm, poetic pratfalls, and slang. He can also do beautiful. Poems that take on the laughs and disasters of aging are often unexpectedly poignant, and in them, reality is realistic. Younger readers are forewarned. Older ones must nod their heads in agreement. *Vanishing Point* is a wake-up call. Reading it, we are no longer sleepwalking through our lives. Trowbridge is a fire alarm without the screeching siren. It is not too much to say his poems save us.”

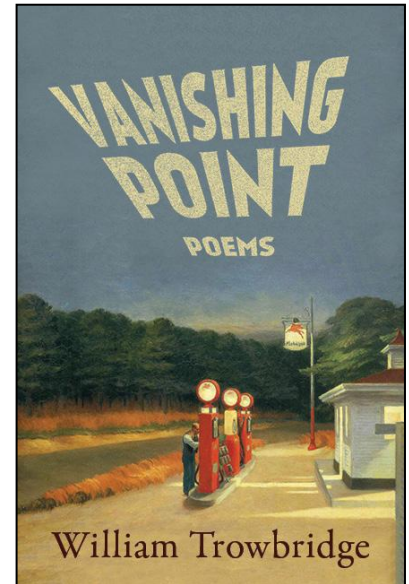
—Kelly Cherry, author of *Twelve Women in a Country Called America*

FROM *VANISHING POINT*

Sticky Notes

They tell us to pay the bills, water
the begonias, wish Aunt Estelle
(the old bat) a happy eighty-sixth.
Our need accrues as years go by
and memory totters. We slap them
on the fridge, car keys, toothbrush,
though sometimes we can’t tell
what the hell we wrote on them.

Near the final chill, we stick them
on birds and trees—goldfinch,
chickadee, sugar maple, weeping
birch, but they come unstuck,
swirl away, muddled among
the snow geese and brown leaves.



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