



95 Poems

E.E. Cummings , George James Firmage (Editor)

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Published in 1958, *95 Poems* is the last book of new poems published in Cummings's lifetime. Remarkable for its vigor, freshness, interest in ordinary individuals, and awareness of the human life cycle, the book reflects Cummings's observations on nature and his prevailing gratitude for whatever life offers: "Time's a strange fellow: more he gives than takes." This new edition joins other individual uniform Liveright paperback volumes drawn from the *Complete Poems*, most recently *Etcetera* and *22 and 50 Poems*.

95 Poems Details

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From Reader Review 95 Poems for online ebook

Valerie says

I'm in the midst of reading this book - which means I've read it once, and some parts more than once, and I'll be coming back to it again.

This is the first book of poetry that I've read in a while. I wanted to start reading poetry again, and I chose E.E. Cummings because I had a recollection that he was an accessible poet, and I remembered liking his wordplay and variations on the actual typeset form of the poems.

Well, I was right and wrong. His interruption of words and sentences could be whimsical, beautiful, and at times baffling to me. There were some poems that could be touched easily...

Beautiful

is the
unmea
ning
of(sil

ently)fal

ling(e
ver
yw
here)s

Now

...and some that I didn't like at all...

as joe gould says in

his terrifyingly hu
man man
ner the only reason every wo
man

should

go to college is so
that she never can(kno
wledge is po
wer)say o

if i

'd
OH
n
lygawntueco

llege

...I understand Joe Gould had some influence on E.E., but seriously - is this the kind of stuff that needs to be immortalized in a poem? Come on, E.E.! I see your repeated emphasis on the word "man", but still.

And then there were those that were simply beyond my grasp...

round a so moon could dream(i sus

pect)only god himself & as
loveless some world not any un

god manufacture might but man

kind yet in park this grim most(these

one who are)lovers cling & kiss
neither beholding a nor seen

by some that bum who's every one

...if anyone can help me out with that one, I'd appreciate it. Really.

Like I said, I'm working with them. I'm coming back, getting used to the language and the breakdown of the words, understanding and intuiting more. I don't know if I'll ever understand it all, but I'm swimming in.

Gabbi says

I think enjoying these poems requires some type of literary understanding that I don't yet have.

Joshua Finnell says

I like 92 too!

Joanna says

I weaseled my father into buying this book for me when I was just a tad bit drunk and belligerent. The used copy he sighed over and then payed for only cost \$1.95, so I was primed to love it for this reason alone. Perhaps in my drunken state, I imagined the punctuation to form a language all its own, but truthfully, this

book is not very interesting at all. The punctuation play can be fun, I liked one maybe two poems, but overall the words don't really function other than to diverge. So basically, I got through half the book, and decided to set it aside.

Rachel says

e. e. cummings is my favorite poet because of his unique form of writing...each poem is like a puzzle, and every poem is set up differently. the method you use to read and understand one may not work for another, or there may be multiple ways to read and interpret the poetry. some poems embrace a "less is more" structure, others literally create shapes on the page with the words. in this collection of poems, e. e. cummings combined the art of poetry with the art of typography to create something appealing to both poetry lovers and designers.

i've read this book of poems from front to back many times, and thoroughly enjoyed each read. with a poem for almost any occasion or mood, this book always makes me think.

Née says

I'm not going to review all of the e.e. cummings collections that I own (there are way too many as I have this thing about collecting them). What I will say is that cummings has this totally selfish/creative/lovely/beautiful/erotic way of writing that just gets me every time. There is rarely a poem of his that I've read that I don't like. He's modern and writes very much that way, and I love his playful use of punctuation and grammar as a means of conveying his emotions. If you've never read cummings, you may love him, you may hate him, but you can't deny that he was an original.

Ashley *Hufflepuff Kitten* says

Read cover to cover in roughly an hour. Some are breathtakingly beautiful, some are utterly confounding (hence the wtf shelving), some are an adorable instant gone in a breath. I soon realized that it helped to read most of them with two separate voices in my head: that of the general text and that of the (text in parentheses). Made it much easier to follow.

1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 16 - 41 - 60 - 73 - 78 - 83 - 87 - 92 - 95

Mélanie says

"noone and a star stand,am to am

(life to life;breathing to breathing
flaming dream to dreaming flame)

united by perfect nothing:

millionary wherewhens distant,as
reckoned by the unimmortal mind,
these immeasurable mysteries
(human one;and one celestial)stand

soul to soul:freedom to freedom

till her utmost secrecies and his
(dreaming flame by flaming dream)
merge—at not imaginable which

instant born,a(who is neither each
both and)Self adventures deathlessness"

#14.

Mike Jensen says

As usual with cummings, I love some poems and despair of understanding others. cummings seems less obscure in his old age, but can still be pretty darn obscure. A couple of poems in this collection actually rhyme, and he does that better than most of his contemporaries. Worthwhile, but my taste is for his early work and the love poems of his early middle period.

Just? says

It's the middle of the night in Edinburgh. The cold wind slowly moves the curtains on the three of my windows and E. E. Cummings makes me long for April. Or November. And makes me look for stars which is impossible under the light-polluted skies. Still, it makes me live and want to live. That's why you should only read poetry under the blanket of darkness.

Kelly says

I read this short volume in a single sitting and concluded that I liked it in spite of also disliking it. Comparing his style of poetry to visual arts made me think that he was a fusion of Picasso, Pollock, and Monet - His use of the basic shapes of language (Picasso) is thrown together in what seem to be random or unexpected ways (Pollock) but the overall impression conveyed in his poetry was pleasing nonetheless (Monet).

Pros: I really enjoyed some of his imagery and clever descriptions. Some of his forms (such as circular/wrapping poems or poems inside poems) were fun to decipher and fun to read.

Cons: His total lack of disregard for conventions of the English language (yes, I know this is a stylistic choice) makes my middle school students' rough drafts look like masterpieces in comparison; this misuse of

punctuation, capitalization, and syntax seems to be a foretaste of and even a contributor to the nonsensicalness of postmodern poetry. Some poems' forms were too complicated or bizarre for me to even bother trying to figure out. And while I'm not opposed to the use of "non-words" in writing, Cummings is no Shakespeare in his creation of new vocabulary.

mwpm says

95 Poems was the last book of new poems published in Cummings's lifetime. This is evident from the style, which appears to be more refined, more fully realized than in Cummings's earlier collections. Cummings's style is most recognizable in the poems that contain his signature arrangement (or derangement) of words. By which I mean unconventional capitalization, spacing, and punctuation. To varying effects. At times the poems appear to be competing thoughts in the mind of the poet ("19"), while others appear tangential ("30"). There are playful poems ("50") and puzzling poems ("53"). But overall, however many trains of thought or word puzzles there may be, the poems appear, more often than not, to be complimentary ("57")...

un(bee)mo

vi
ng(in)g
are(th
e)you(o
nly)

asl(rose)eep
- 19 (pg. 20)

what Got him was Noth

ing & nothing's exAct
ly what any
one Living(or some
body Dead
like
even a Poet)could
hardly express what
i Mean is
what knocked him over Wasn't
(for instance)the Knowing your

whole(yes god

damned)life is a Flop or even
to
Feel how
Everything(dreamed
& hoped &
prayed for

months & weeks & days & years
& nights &
forever)is Less Than
Nothing(which would have been

Something)what got him was nothing
- 30 (pg. 32)

!

o(rounD)moon,how
do
you(rouNd
er
than roUnd)float;
who
lly &(rOunder than)
go
:ldenly(Round
est)

?

- 50 (pg. 53)

n

ot eth
eold almos
tladyf eebly
hurl ing
cr u

mb

son ebyo
neatt wothre
efourfi ve&six
engli shsp
arr ow

s

- 53 (pg. 56)

old age sticks
up Keep
Off

signs)&

youth yanks them
down(old
age
cries No

Tres)&(pas)
youth laughs
(sing
old age

scolds Forbid
den Stop
Must
n't Don't

&)youth goes
right on
gr
owing old
- 57 (pg. 60)

I'm always interested to see the recurrence of ee in Cummings's poetry. It seems to me that the poet is signing his work...

dim
i
nu
tiv

e this park is e
mpty (every b
ody's elsewher
e except me 6 e

nglish sparrow
s)a
utumn & t
he rai

n
th
e
raintherain
- 24 (pg. 25)

the(oo)is

lOOk
(aliv
e)e
yes

are(chIld)and

wh(g
o
ne)
o

w(A)a(M)s
- 68 (pg. 71)

My favourite lines in the collection...

"as small as a world and as large as alone" (10, pg. 11)

"because my tears / are full of eyes" (25, pg. 27)

"worlds are to dream now / dreams are to breathe" (83, pg. 86)

This collection contains Cummings's most overtly political poem, addressing the USA's role in the Hungarian Revolution...

Thanksgiving (1956)

a monsterring horror swallows
this unworld me by you
as the god of our fathers' father bows
to a which that walks like a who

but the voice-with-a-smile of democracy
announces night & day
"all poor little peoples that want to be free
just trust in the u s a"

suddenly uprore hungary
and she gave a terrible cry
"no slave's unlife shall murder me
for i will freely die"

she cried so high thermopylae

heard her and marathon
and all prehuman history
and finally The UN

"be quiet little hungary
and do as you are bid
a good kind bear is angary
we fear for the quo pro quid"

uncle sam shrugs his pretty
pink shoulders you know how
and he twitches a liberal titty
and lisps "i'm busy right now"

so rah-rah-rah democracy
let's all be as thankful as hell
and bury the statue of liberty
(because it begins to smell)

- 39 (pg. 41)

Konstantin says

[rating = B-]

This collection was a bit more traditional, at least in terms of style, though also in subject matter. The best poems were 10-40, all the others were either a bit vague or just ordinary. Although he still retains his lovely way of looking at the world and by compounding odd words together, he also tended to write in a bit of a daze, as if he wasn't fully invested in the later section of the collection. But all the same, I love E. E. Cummings and find him invigorating and original.

Darwin8u says

*"...higher than should can hope or him can hide)
and this is the wonder that's keeping the stars apart*

i carry your heart(i carry it in my heart)

- E.E. Cummings, 95 Poems, "92"

Hunched,
parkfriendlyplay-
fully(feel
he feeds &

robins) through
soft bars
sunshined
of whys &
democraticyellow
daffodils of >

(now)

Old poet
coppes
silken web
truth*tulles*
of April --
triangulating:
(i) third-person
love, &
(ii) singular simple
time, w/
(iii) always present >

(death) &c.

Neha says

This collection had some of Cummings' most well known poems, as well as some I'd never even heard of. It was a beautiful reintroduction to his work; poem 51 in particular really got to me. I'm not sure why, and I'm content with that - keeping the poem and its wonder with me.
