



Fabric (The Bell Collection)

Jessica Bell

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A rich collection of poems that take the reader on a deep tour of the psyche. Charting and moving across politics of language, Bell explores love, pain, failure and redemption from a variety of angles. Most of the poems sit at the fragile threshold of instinct and meaning, using symbol and sensation to get to the shock of denouement. From 'Spandex' to the Greek kafeneion, there are unexpected juxtapositions and discoveries to be found in Jessica Bell's 'Fabric'. This voice is equally inspired by the quotidian, Greek jargon words, and the mythic figures of Echo and Narcissus, Aphrodite, and, of course, Euterpe, the muse of music and the lyric. The interstices of the so-called ordinary with the always larger dramas of feeling and its consequences are among the subjects this young poet explores in her vivid weave of language.

Fabric (The Bell Collection) Details

Date : Published October 1st 2016 by Vine Leaves Press (first published April 16th 2012)

ISBN : 9781925417418

Author : Jessica Bell

Format : Paperback 78 pages

Genre : Poetry, Adult

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From Reader Review Fabric (The Bell Collection) for online ebook

Talli Roland says

After reading Jessica Bell's first book of poetry, Twisted Velvet Chains, I was looking forward to delving into more of her powerful, lyrical poems. I certainly wasn't disappointed.

The interior of Fabric is beautifully formatted and arranged, luring the reader in as soon as you open the cover. Drawing heavily on Greek terminology and mythology, Bell's poems are an assault to the senses. This is writing that you cannot be neutral about. Bell demands a response and, in my opinion, demands to be read.

Len says

Very vivid, lyrical, well-woven words to describe scenes, feelings and emotions. I always get engrossed reading Jessica's poems..I get lost in her world, that I don't stop. Her first poetry book, Twisted Velvet Chains does the same to me each time I open it on my Kindle. Yes, I still read it, over and over.

Jessica's poetry always inspires. This one in particular is very engaging. Each page gets into different points in people's lives, making it so different from any other poetry books I've read so far. This is a book for people who love not just poems, but words, beautiful, lyrical, descriptive words about life. It's a book full of heart and requires to be read.

Judy Croome says

An interesting poetic style, strong and intense, making some of the poems dark-edged. Imaginatively set out and worth a second read, especially after the author's notes and glossary at the end. The concept of our imperfections being part of the fabric of our lives added clarity to some of more esoteric poems. As someone who did evolutionary astrology charts for many years before turning to writing, the discussion on the numerological significance of the number 7 was fascinating, as was the structure and content of this thought-provoking collection of poems.

Medeia Sharif says

While I read Jessica Bell's FABRIC I was constantly amazed by her juxtaposition of words. Her word choice and style are beautiful and haunting. I found myself rereading the poems, and I'll probably read this book at another time to dive back into Bell's lyricism.

Laurie Clayton says

This is the second of Jessica Bell's poetic compilations that I have had the pleasure to read.

As with 'Twisted Velvet Chains', Ms Bell's 'Fabric' commands your attention with her thought provoking and often knife edged observations and imagery.

'Fabric' draws upon Greek mythology, language and to some extent the country's political landscape. It is powerfully written and if I had to choose just one poem to highlight, it has to be 'Not Who I Thought You Were'.

Don't worry if you're not up on your Greek mythology etc. Ms Bell has included a comprehensive Appendix at the end of the book.

Definitely a poetry book designed to provoke/promote a response and worth reading, at least once.

Richard Hartwell says

This collection is not to be casually read. Yes, it IS accessible poetry. No, these poems are NOT for the superficial reader. Guideposts are provided. There is context to be found in both the selection and order of the pieces. The four sections build from the individual, to a pairing, to the collective, and finally to the others; from the I of logos, through multiple views of pathos, to the beliefs and ideals that bind us all, the ethos. I don't mean to sound philosophic, but there are multiple layers of meaning in this collection that should not be lost to the reader.

Jessica Bell's "Fabric" contains all the lyric metaphor I have come to expect from this prolific author/poet/songwriter/musician. The astute reader will appreciate this poet's command of language, both English and the sprinkled Greek. The scenes, the vignette's of real life, are painted with a deft brush and a true artist's eye. The nuanced actions and reactions of characters are depicted with the same craft Bell brings to painting the broad canvas of human emotions; the casual as well as the darkly tragic. Again I wax verbosely, but that is only an expression of the enthusiasm I have for Jessica Bell's "Fabric." I know you will too.

Amy Saia says

In an appealing format with Greek text sprinkled throughout, Fabric is a beautiful new poetry collection from prolific musician and author, Jessica Bell.

I've always been jealous of poets. And more than that, those with such a lyrical ability to capture life on page in the same simplicity that I might take a breath. I'm jealous of people like Jessica Bell. In Fabric, page after page, she transcribes her life down to the simplest detail with an eye of grace. Each poem averages the length of one page, just enough to tell a story in a few seconds. She covers her life in Greece—little things like butter knives, women making baklava, flying scarves, skinny dipping in blue waters. She captures it all with her own style of femininity and a little touch of morbidness that sometimes equates to humor, sometimes sadness.

Perhaps because of her musical background, Jessica Bell has a lovely way with alliteration. Her words smack like bubble gum, and deliver the tiny intricacies of everyday life in flowing, beautiful form. It was a pleasure to read.

Matthew Macnish says

Fearless, visceral, vivid, and gorgeous, *Fabric* is an emotional blockbuster. Jessica's poems make a reader truly feel, and will you draw you into their depths like a beautiful lover.

Leigh Moore says

GORGEOUS!

Fabric reads like a series of snapshots of important scenes from different lives. Sometimes they're right when the thing happens, other times they're reflections. And then some are little stories told from a glance, like side-view images.

It's extremely accessible, so don't think, "Oh. Poetry." (Trust me on this.)

My favorites are the ones that look back on a situation the speaker misunderstood, like in the poem "Mustard," where the speaker's nemesis is not what she seems. POWERFUL.

I tend to miss critical moments when they happen, and upon reflection, I realize how I really felt about them. Bell captures that beautifully in 500 words or less.

FAVORITE LINES:

"I hope prison treats you better than I did."

"The gravel shines like clusters of black diamonds. It was summer. I wasn't afraid."

"You hold my hand as if holding heartache--careful."

Uhh! See what I'm saying?

In one, Bell uses a butter knife to trace a path, and in another she writes the same lines in and out--like the reflection on a lake ("Once"). And I just adored every word of "Spandex," and ... OK, this was supposed to be a short review.

Seriously, if you only have ONE collection of poetry, this should be it. It's like a tray of the best chocolate in the world sitting on your counter and any random moment, you can pick it up and read a poem and have this amazing experience.

Magdalena says

In Julia Kristeva's *New Maladies of the Soul*, a question is posed about the relationship between the body and the mind; biology and representation. Kristeva suggests that it is in the play between an essentially female

politic, emotional/physical pain, physical desire, and perception, where new meaning is created. This is the landscape of Jessica Bell's *Fabric*, a forthcoming collection of poetry. The book explores multiple identities and perspectives, some soft and maternal, and others harsh and vindictive. All of the poems go deep into the heart of emotion, charting a story of disappointment, longing, betrayal with a multi-sensual approach: seeing with fingers, knitting regret, and swallowing regret with pride.

Jessica Bell pulls no punches with her words that always seek to strip off surface veneer, sometimes literally, as in "Bandages":

Undress.
I want to see how you tear;
how She mummified
your intangible life. (14)

The book is divided into four parts, each with seven poems, pivoting around the themes of "me," "you," "us," and "them." The tone of each section is slightly different, driven by the seven haiku, set sideways on the seven windows that precede each section.

Though written for English speakers, the poems are enriched by Greek words of endearment and respect like *Yiayia* and *Papou* (Grandma and Grandpa), of place - *Monemvasia*, of mythology - *Euterpe*, Echo and Narcissus and Athena, of scent and flavour with thick Greek coffee and *Halva*, and even of sarcasm and humour with *Malaka* (jerk). The book ends with an appendix that defines and clarifies the Greek words.

The more bitter poems hinge on relationships such as the sting in "Goat Skin Beer Holder":

You smack your lips
to the rhythms you chew
and sniff your snot
like leftovers. (18)

or on poor parenting, such as disgust that underpins "Not Who I Thought You Were", the self-defeating rage of "Flesh", the moment's pause in "Postpartum", or the twisted regret of "Mama's Confession":

The old maid's weapons
are blunt; brittle—painted
with layers and layers of pearl (7)

Not all of the poems in *Fabric* are angry. Some of best poems in the collection are tender: nostalgia mingling with regret. There were few readers who couldn't relate to that sense of loss that underscores "Mustard":

You winked.
Your needles clicked.
But I saw scorn
and squinted at you,
sucking my tongue
to the roof
of my mouth,
thinking
you were trying
to outdo my knitting skills.
You were dying.
You didn't tell me. (16)

Similarly, a grandmother's home-made halva creates a Proustian series of images that drive the reader towards the immortality of DNA, love and care:

Every day I'd watch
you press baked almonds
into the squishy centers
of the diamond-shaped
brown sweets.
You were granting them hearts.
And that's when you'd bring out the sugar.
And a sieve.
And sprinkle your name all over my world. (12)

Jessica Bell's *Fabric* is a rich collection of poems that take the reader on a deep tour of the psyche. Charting and moving across a politic of language, Bell explores love, pain, failure and redemption from a variety of angles. Most of the poems sit at the fragile threshold of instinct and meaning, using symbol and sensation to get to the shock of denouement. This is a significant collection that bears multiple readings, each time yielding something fresh.

Cathy says

Absolutely loved and devoured this poetry collection.

Jim says

Jessica Bell's second collection of poems takes a look at life from a peculiarly Greek perspective. Broken into four sections--me, you, us and them (each section containing seven poems prefixed by seven haiku)--she unravels the fabric of modern life. There are hermits, crazies, murderers, abusers, failed parents, needy

people, Nazis, sick people, the suicidal, the depressed--as well as the odd, sweet grandchild. On her blog Jessica writes "if you read Fabric, you're not reading poetry, you're reading about people"

Read my full review on my blog [here](#).

Amie McCracken says

Jessica Bell's new poetry collection, Fabric, is full of life. It reads like little stories in the lilt and cadence of her tone and voice with raw emotions ranging from anguish to giddiness to satire.

I am not a poetry reader, I really wish I were and that I had the ability to put words like that onto paper. I would love to let my inner self flow like that. But even though it's not my thing, I couldn't put Jessica's book down. I thought I would spend a few days, savoring a poem here or there. But I never stopped. And even after, I went back to taste again on a few of my favorites. I particularly love one called 'Once.' It goes forward and then takes the same lines backward - what artistry to make that happen, and then I found even more meaning behind it in the appendix. Stunning!

Glynis Smy says

I enjoy poetry that rolls around my tongue, allowing me to savour, devour and dine on words pulling me into a banquet of prose. Fabric didn't do that for me.

I felt it!

I felt the rough edges of sack cloth disappointment, the starched cotton of indifference, the smooth satin of sensuality, and the gossamer of love. All these feelings Jessica Bell drew from me with her unique style. She quite literally gave me a new view of poetry.

Imperfection is the binding of Fabric. It portrays every human trait within each piece. The extra delights of finding snippets of Greek culture added to my pleasure.

Do not look for a roses around the door style work in this book. If it's there it will most probably have thorns. Look around you and note of how society is made up and functions, and you too will feel Fabric.

Katrina says

Good reads win: This was such a well put together and lovely work of poetry. It's a first for me to be reading this author's work and I just have to say I became a fan. The poems are for the most part pretty dark and very personal. I have to say this will be one of my books that I will reread from time to time.
