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DRIVE by Elaine Sexton

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“Silently / pulling for itself, / the will wants the body to // give it what it wants,” Sexton writes in “Between the Car and the Sea,” at once a description of a car’s body propelling her onward, and of the poet herself, the one behind the wheel of this masterful fourth collection of poems. In an extraordinary act of volition, the author does not stop at the trope of ambition, but powers instead toward the urgent concerns of the will, and intention.

In *Drive*, Sexton explores our most fragile points of connection—to lovers and family, to the living and the dead, and to oneself, one’s own life’s work—with the care and wisdom of one who knows these roads. In her hands, these delicate boundaries become navigable. They are both her route and her destination.

Praise for DRIVE:

“Great poets teach us to see in words, moments, actions, emotions, and Elaine Sexton does this so vividly and visually that the reader, this reader, is there, with her on her *Drive*. Continually inventive, often startling, the poems in this beautiful collection are a gift for writers, artists, and anyone who loves language.”

– Jonathan Santlofer, author of *The Last Mona Lisa* and *The Widower’s Notebook*

“In this dazzling collection, Elaine Sexton brings a life lived in poetry to a startling new premise: acceleration equals exhilaration. These poems make me long to be on the road in America, foot on the pedal and heart in the wind.”

– Jeet Thayil, author of *Names of the Women* and *The Book of Chocolate Saints*

More Praise for This Author

“Elaine Sexton’s poetry is furious and unstoppable—and it is all the more so because it insinuates itself into our consciousness with such love and exquisite tenderness. Underneath that tenderness, though, is a relentless will to forego the inessential, to take the measure of the real, to uncover the secret and silent engines of our human grief.” – Vijay Seshadri

“Elaine Sexton knows how to raise autobiography to the level of true poetry, and this knack has something to do with her use of surprise. Just when we think we know where one of her poems is going, we step into air. *Sleuth* lead us carefully into her life through a series of bracing verbal delights.” – Billy Collins

“Elegy without sentimentality seems a natural part of Sexton’s keen-eared lyric manner and, in every sense, responsibility. Lodged in various locales, whether urban or rural, earthbound or on the open sea, answering a landscape, a family memory, or the vagaries of love, the poems of *Causeway* are always informed by an honest buoyancy of spirit that can mix ‘the scent of lilacs’ with ‘smokers’ coughs,’ as the imagination testifies to the hard-won realization that ‘Even in these / toxic times, we live, we thrive.’” – Eamon Grennan

“In [*Prospect/Refuge*] her third, most agile collection, Sexton not only “makes order of disorder and sometimes takes it back,” but also divulges a private periodic table that makes the reader privy to hidden elements of being—read it and delight!”—Jessica Greenbaum

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Elaine Sexton is the author of three previous collections of poetry, *Prospect/Refuge* (Sheep Meadow Press, 2015), *Causeway* (New Issues Press, 2008), and *Sleuth* (New Issues Press, 2003). Her poems, reviews, and artwork have appeared in numerous journals, anthologies, and sites, including *American Poetry Review*, *O! the Oprah Magazine*, and *Poetry*. She is a member of the faculty of the Writing Institute of Sarah Lawrence College, and frequent guest faculty at various writing and art centers in the US and abroad. She a member of the National Book Critics Circle, and lives in New York City and the North Fork of Long Island.
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ABOUT THE PRESS: Grid Books is a publisher of poetry, fiction, and fine art editions foregrounding creative work that springs from the margins. Founded in 2003 as a forum for older poets whose work is often sidelined by mainstream publishing, Grid Books continues in its mission to publish work that reflects a diversity of voices, values, and lived experience.
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